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Factors that affect the English language teaching-learning
process in Ecuadorian public high schools

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the Factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools during a six-month period in five different public high schools located in the city of Guayaquil.

The study started by analyzing the deficiencies in the process of instructional competence, classroom conditions, as well as characteristics of in-service English teachers, and technological innovations which limit the impact obtained in public high school education. An analysis of the teachers' competence and performance not only tests the knowledge of the language, but also the skills and attitudes.

The method of this research was descriptive, with clear documentation, based on observation and survey; population included teachers, and students. The observation sheet considered fifteen 'on-site' classes throughout the study which detected these deficiencies during the development of the classes.

This research aims to redirect the traditional teaching-learning system in public high schools which will positively contribute to their future professionalism development.

This research's main conclusion according the observed classes was that the students had a low level of English Language Proficiency.

INTRODUCTION

“Do you speak English?” is a daily heard question all over the world. Without hesitation English is the most spoken language around the world. It is now spoken as a first language by approximately 380 million people around the globe, and as a second language or as a foreign language by a billion people (Fewell, 2010). It has been apparent for quite some time then; of course English is the language of international business, technology, science, education, art, etc.

In addition to this, English has become popular among people who find the internet useful for communication and interaction, whether it takes place in a social web-page or in a simple e-mail. It is not a surprise then why so many countries have approved and encouraged the teaching of English as a second language.

Ecuador is not an exception; in 1992 the government made an agreement with Great Britain to improve the way English was going to be taught in public high schools by making it mandatory.

Furthermore, the government has stated the importance of teaching English in elementary schools as a way of preparing pupils from the beginning.

However, despite all these efforts, it has been noted that students reach the University stage with little or no knowledge of English. Therefore, it is important to establish the factors that affect the quality of English language teaching and learning process in our high schools.

This research was based on previous studies, such as the one conducted by Sarikoban, & Sakizli (2006) which analyzed the factors that influence a good classroom management, and introduce solutions to the problems.

In order to observe the classroom management skills and applications of the teachers, a questionnaire covering the subject areas that were taught during the training program as well as teachers' own experiences was prepared and implemented in 30 teachers randomly.

The results indicate that most of the teachers are aware of the skills taught during the teacher training program and they usually have good management skills. It also proved that it is really effective and useful to provide teachers with teacher training programs for classroom management skills.

A second study which was done by Aduwa and Iyamu (2006) surveyed the factors responsible for the poor quality of the teaching of English as a second language in public secondary schools in Nigeria. The central tools used for this study were a questionnaire and observation schedules.

The results demonstrated that environmental factors showed that secondary school students in Nigeria do not learn English in an environment favorable to effective learning.

They concluded that public secondary schools in Nigeria are far behind time in offering multiple pathways to the teaching and learning English as a second language. Also, secondary school teachers in Nigeria are not altering their instructional practices in spite of the coming of the new instructional technologies. Traditionally, teachers have depended on textbooks and the chalkboards as media for disseminating knowledge in the classroom.

Finally, Narayanan, Rajasekaran, and Iyyappan (2008) analysed some factors that affected learning English as a second language at the tertiary level. For this study questionnaires were prepared and data was collected mainly in written form.

The study attempted to focus on matters related to factors affecting the English learning among engineering and technology students.

The results showed that factors such as motivation, attitude, language anxiety and gender have an unlimited influence or affect student's English learning.

This research's objective is to determine the classroom conditions in which English lessons take place, also to identify the characteristics of in-service English teachers as well as to establish teachers' instructional competence.

Personal interviews had been coordinated with some of the teachers and students of five public high-schools, located in various places in the city of Guayaquil. Additionally, fifteen classes were observed to see the way the lessons were presented to the students, (three per each high school).

This study will certainly benefit not only teachers, students, and public and private educational institutions, but also anyone involved in the teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools.

In fact, as with any other research quite a few issues had been found along the way, for instance, it had been noticed that for one of the key questions in order to determine the teachers' level of education, there has not been an argument to compare it with, since documents, degrees, or diplomas were not asked as part of this study.

In addition, a deeper observation of the classes is necessary in order to establish a more realistic view of the classroom environment. This, due to the fact that some teachers were not told that an observation was going to take place, so lessons were especially prepared for these classes. It is also important to mention that in some cases a copy of the questionnaires translated into Spanish were requested by

the officials of the Educational Institutions to find out what the research was going to be about.

Finally, this study's objective is to redirect the focus on the Factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools which will positively contribute to the students' future professionalism development and to achieve the academic goals.

METHOD

Setting and Participants

This research was carried out in five public high schools in different locations in the city of Guayaquil, Ecuador. In order to gather the required information fifteen English teachers randomly chosen were interviewed and observed during the performance of their lessons given in the classrooms.

In addition, one student per-lesson was also interviewed randomly after each individual class in order to obtain the proper feedback from the alumni, a total of fifteen students' altogether. The average age per student interviewed fluctuated between, thirteen to sixteen. Observations were taken in the school and inside the classroom.

Procedures

Former studies have showed and proved that the process of teaching and learning a new language implies interaction of “teachers and students, in a social environment” (Saricoban & Sakisli, 2006, p.1).

Moreover, some other studies have gone a bit further examining other factors including gender, motivation, and experience of the students to see how these play a key role in the quality of English language teaching-learning process in high school education.

Although some results have been inconclusive, gender difference has proved to be not one of the variables contributing to the differences in the choices of language learning strategies (Khamkhien, 2010).

However, most of the research done in the past has concurred that much of it depends on the way classrooms are managed (Aduwa-Ogiegbaen & Iyamu, 2006).

In addition, the use of new gadgets and technology in the classroom allow the students to feel more engaged in participating in the process as well (Fewell, 2010).

A written formal request by the Universidad Técnica Particular Loja was handed in to the five public high schools chosen by the researchers in order to get consent from the different principals or their representatives for the study to be carried out.

The general approach applied for this present study was Quantitative. For this study data was collected mainly in written modes.

The techniques applied for collecting the information were surveys and note-taking. Surveys were used later on to be tabulated and to be the point of reference for the average figures taken from the study and the graphs to represent them.

The use of note-taking has helped a lot in this study to highlight the different aspects that were not considered in the surveys, as well as additional information to be counted as primary for documenting the key factors pertaining to the specific objectives of the study.

The main instruments used for this research were questionnaires, one designed in English for the teachers, which had been set up of 20 questions containing the aspects of the four variables of this study: factors concerning students, factors concerning teachers, factors concerning classrooms, and factors concerning educational institutions.

A second questionnaire in Spanish was also taken orally by the students who had to answer 14 questions to give their appreciation of the way classes are managed in their courses by the teachers.

Additionally, observation formats in English were used in these fifteen classes in order to obtain updated information about their development in areas such as teachers' instructional competence, the classroom conditions in which English lessons take place, identify the characteristics of in-service English teachers, students' language proficiency in English as well as a list of questions at the end to test the Language Proficiency of each teacher according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2002).

The resources that were taken into account for this research were books about pedagogy, psychology, classroom management, educational research, and information on the internet and the Didactic guide provided by the Universidad Tecnica Particular de Loja as well as 5 previous research studies taken from different parts of the world.

While collecting the information from the teachers, special attention was given to the awareness that only one choice out of many in each question was going to be selected. Few errors were found on the teacher's answers at this point, for example two of them had marked more than one answer in one question in particular. One teacher mentioned that in his class more than one method was used, so he thought it would be 'unfair' to select just one answer.

After gathering all the data from the teachers, researchers had to enter the classroom where the class was about to start. By the time the lesson was over, the researcher had filled in the observation format and taken notes as key additional information.

Finally, a student questionnaire was filled in as an interview with one of them was carried out as a wrap-up for this on site study.

After, collecting all the data from the Teachers Questionnaire, a tabulating process in an Excel sheet was designed in a manner in which the twenty different questions were cross analysed with both the observation format and the student questionnaire in order to obtain the proper percentages sought for the four variables pertaining to this study.

The features considered in order to analyse the results were the percentages of the teachers who answered positively or not to the different questions that were asked during the interviews, as well as the input received from the students during their interviews and finally, the information that was gathered during the observation of each of one of the classes.

DISCUSSION

Literature Review

After Mandarin, English is the most spoken language across the world. English is now spoken as a first language by approximately 380 million people around the globe, as a second language or as a foreign language by a billion (Fewell, 2010).

In Ecuador, as well as in many countries, English is the language that is officially taught in various public and private educational institutions. The popularity of this language is due to the practical benefit derived from learning it, to be the most widespread language globally spoken. The knowledge of more than one language is an advantage for everyone, which is one of the most important issues in a globalized world, considered also a characteristic of modern education.

Considering that the challenge of contemporary education is to develop the skills of students, and to interrelate them in their own community, and in an increasingly closer worldwide community; we can say that the knowledge of several languages and particularly English, which is recognized mostly as the universal language per excellence, is essential. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Ecuador (2008) considers the English language as a work tool for the future professionals who have been trained in classrooms today, therefore, it is one of the major elements in their complete training.

Learning a second language means to give a more concrete sense to interculturality, since it is considered that learning another language is not a privilege of elites, but a crucial necessity of education. Therefore, learning English allows younger students a stepping stone towards advancing in some of the best academic

institutions, and in consequence increasing their possibilities for a better life. As follows, we will explain among the various types of approaches, methods which allow and facilitate teachers to convey the English language knowledge to their students all over Ecuador.

Teaching Approaches and Methods

Teaching approaches and methods are considered to be a teacher's own personal philosophy of teaching. Among the various kinds of methods used by teachers in classrooms all over is the Grammar Translation Method. According to Richards & Rodgers (2001) the Grammar Translation Method is a manner of studying a language which handles the language initially through comprehensive analysis of its grammar rules, and then it is followed by application of this knowledge to the undertaking of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language. Another important approach which serves as a tool for teachers is the Whole Language Approach, which stresses learning to read and write on a natural form by applying real communication. Richards & Rogers (2001) explain that the Whole language approach pictures language organization from the interactional perspective. Thus, language is viewed as an essential tool applied for important purposes, and also for carrying out real functions. If the Whole language approach gives us the idea of a connection among readers and writers the Total physical response method is form around the coordination of speech and action. Richards & Rogers (2001) explain that this method focuses on teaching the language by means of physical activity. It was developed by James Asher, who claimed that speech intended for young children is made up of instructions, which children react to physically first, before they start to create verbal responses. In the same manner,

Asher believes that adults ought to repeat the steps by which children attain their native language.

Conversely, McCafferty & DaSilva (2006) explain that the Cooperative Language Learning Method relates to the degree of group support and to the level of every member of the group that requires to learn and to show his or her achievement. Even though they differ according to the age of the learners and the cultural framework, collaborative ability contains requesting for help, giving reasons, verbal communication at a suitable volume level, differing respectfully, paraphrasing, paying attention carefully, giving suggestions, persuading others to participate, assuring that others understand.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that students have to get along always with it. In addition, in second language it is essential for students to learn how to interact in argumentative situations, that is, “how to assert themselves in the second language, as well as how to acquiesce” (McCafferty, Jacobs & DaSilva, 2006, p. 36). Finally we have the CLT, which has two main guiding principles: the first is that language is not just patterns of grammar with vocabulary items slotted in, but also involves language functions such as inviting, agreeing and disagreeing, suggesting, which students should learn how to perform using a variety of language exponents. Harmer (2007) explained that students also need to be aware of the need for appropriacy when talking and writing to people in terms of the kind of language they use (formal, informal). The second principle of Communicative Language Teaching is that if students get enough exposure to the language and opportunities for language use-and, if they are motivated, then language learning will take care of itself. As a

result, the focus of CLT has been on students communicating real messages, and not just grammatically controlled language.

Teaching techniques

According to Mukalel (1998) techniques are distinct and methodical actions that the teacher presents from time to time to stimulate behavior among students. Among the many techniques available to teachers we have, questioning and pictorial illustration.

There is also the role play technique, in which students act out specific circumstances. The role play technique entails tasks in which students play out their real feelings to a specific problematic situation presented to them.

Conversely, the dramatization technique according to Cornejo (1989) uses preconceived situations which are presented before of the class. Nevertheless, besides the point that there are differences among the various types of techniques available for teachers to pass on knowledge to their students, it does not mean that there cannot be used with one another. For instance, Steveck (1993) showed that the basic technique of teaching students a conversation by showing them a picture to suggest a background could have distinct conclusions about teaching and learning depending on how the technique is handled.

Managing learning,

Evertson and Veinstein (2006) suggested that schools are expected to supply students with the appropriate learning environment, so classroom management is not an end in itself “but a means for creating and maintaining a learning environment that is optimal given the intended curriculum.” Thus, the appropriate physical setting, task assignment, discourse management must be considered in order to produce the

best results of the intended curriculum. This will require preparing learners to act out different roles in different circumstances. Under this premise we could presume that the ultimate learning setting usually implicates optimizing instead of maximizing.

In other words, a teacher can have too much control as well as too little, or the wrong kind. Therefore, a teacher is required to elaborate lessons suitable for an outwardly paced schedule. According to Gower, Phillips & Walters (1995) some good teachers like to have a low-key personality in their classroom, which in turn makes them excellent educators.

In contrast, other teachers who have both a lively and amusing personality, are good entertainers, but are far from being considered teachers. Feedback can be very powerful if done well. All the above steps are essential if teachers are to manage learning appropriately, but it is far from being complete if there is not feedback from the students. Brookhart (2008) suggests that the power of formative feedback rests in its double-barreled approach, which deals equally with cognitive and motivational issues at the same time. Good quality feedback offers students the information they need so they can recognize where they are in their learning and what to do next. Good quality feedback holds information that a learner can make use of, which indicates that, the student ought to be able to hear and comprehend. Woolfolk (2010) concluded that the goal of classroom management is to preserve a positive, productive learning environment.

Lesson design

Designing a lesson is an important routine of an everyday teacher's life schedule.

According to Gower, Phillips, Walters (2005) by designing lessons that focus on the student's activities including listening, direct instruction, reading, writing, discussing, illustrating, conducting experiments, teachers can create an interesting mix of activities that are likely to have high participation levels in the classroom.

In accordance with Briggs, Gustafson & Tillman (1991) the instructional events that involve a lesson must be related to the specific objectives to be accomplished and to the learners who are to apply them. Consequently, Woodward (2001) gives many reasons to plan lessons, such as inspire confidence in students who pick up a feeling of purpose, progression and coherence; plans can be used in lessons to get things started, and prompt memory, and can help us to answer student questions. Above all, the basic information that must be included is related with aims, procedures, activities, materials, aids and equipment, information about the students, and also anticipated problems (Gower, Phillips, & Walters, 2005).

A well planned lesson would be easily recognized by the students, thus, sending a message that demonstrates that the teacher has dedicated time to planning the lesson. On the other hand, Harmer (2007) explains that the lack of preparation may imply the opposite of these teachers' qualities. Woodward (2001) illustrated that perhaps the majority of educators almost certainly believe that language is in part an ability that can be trained, to a degree a topic matter that you can know about, to a degree an instinct, and to a certain extent a natural organic system that develops gradually over the years.

Class size

This is a topic of great concern for most teachers in Ecuador, especially for those in public schools. According to Blatchford (2003) there is not much research

regarding the effects of class size differences on teachers and students. It does not matter the size of the class, how big it is, it is important to remember that it is made up of individuals, the majority of whom would like to be listened by the teacher directly. Gower and Walters (2005) wisely illustrated that preferably every single student must be given the chance to repeat any new language; have their errors corrected; have independent assignments if necessary; believe that they are an important part of the class in equal proportion.

Clearly, the bigger the class, the more complicated is to attain information. Teachers in large classes probably would have to be brief when providing acknowledgement: a smile, a gesture, a word of support, but no matter how brief, we must always underline its importance.

In contrast, in smaller classes the teacher ought to be able to give more personalized attention to every student, especially if requested.

On the contrary, English is taught in a number of public schools to groups larger than 100 students. Harmer (2007) points out that public school classes in several countries have up to 30 students, while in a private school of language the number is around 8 and 15 students.

Based on this information, it is clear that the size of the class will influence education. The larger the class the more the attention is divided and it is more difficult to achieve the ideal of every student being attended to their own individual needs. Class size is just as important as studying other factors which affect teaching, “class size must be seen as one contextual influence of classroom life, to which teachers and pupils will inevitably have to adapt, and which will affect the nature of the interaction between teachers and pupils” (Blatchford, 2003, p. 9).

Classroom space

Educators are conscious of the problems that come about when an excessive number of students are assigned to classroom without sufficient space to hold them. McLeod, Fisher and Hoover (2003) point out that previous studies related to classroom density have established that overcrowded classrooms have an effect on student attitudes and behavior by increasing their displeasure and belligerence and diminishing concentration.

Additionally, over crowdedness affects the manner students behave and move about the classroom, also how much attention they pay in class. Blatchford (2007) argues that smaller classes give the teacher the opportunity to provide more instructional support and extra focused teaching.

The overwhelming majority of today's public school teachers believe that smaller classes provide more effective and flexible teaching and the potential for more effective learning. The classroom space in combination with seating arrangement can affect the way students participate in class. There are similarities between McLeod, Fisher and Hoover and Woolfolk (2007) as they also believe that "the organization of space also affects the way students behave and move around the classroom, as well as how much attention they pay to instruction" (McLeod, Fisher & Hoover, 2003, p. 3).

Seating arrangement

Seating arrangement can be considered to be in the same category as class size and class space, it has a direct link to how a student can benefit from their environment. There are many different seating arrangements that can be done depending on what the activity will be or who it will benefit. It is essential to

mention that a teacher's position and the manner in which he or she organizes the seating arrangements of the students in class are of great importance.

According to Gower, Phillips, and Walters (2005) classrooms today are multicultural classes, a combination of cultures, societies, religions, things that teacher must keep in mind when it is time to organize the seating arrangement. The teacher must consider cultural and religious beliefs, since the perceptions of individual space may differ from culture to culture. In multicultural classes, the improper seating arrangement may cause discomfort or even offence to other students because they might be seating too close.

Woolfolk (2007) considers that there are two simple forms of organizing space, "personal territories and interest areas." In other words, organizing the seating arrangement for the students, according to how the teacher sees the class. The teacher could organize the class in horizontal rows, if the intention is to guide the students' attention towards him at all time. There is also the option of using orderly rows. In this arrangement the teacher has a clear vision of all the students. It makes lecturing easier; enabling the teacher to maintain eye contact with the people he or she is talking to and in the case that the teacher has designed a discussion class organizing a circle arrangement would be most appropriate. Harmer (2007) clarifies this point by mentioning that classes which are arranged in a circle make a solid statement regarding what the instructor and the students believe in. Finally, if the teachers sit with their students in a circle, it would make the environment friendlier; as a result, the attention will move from the teacher to the group.

Classroom and/or teaching resources.

Kochlar (1985) explains that an exceptional improvement in today's education is the growing use of extra devices by which educators establish and connect accuracy concepts, and understanding. Among the many devices available for teachers, there are visual aids. The most common form is real objects, or better known as realia, pictures or photographs, maps, diagrams. Investigators suggested that in teaching we ought to appeal to the mind generally through the visual and hearing sense organs, because researchers believe that possibly the 85 percent of learning is captivated by these senses. But not all public schools are privileged to have access to these devices. This may vary according to the institution, location and perhaps even the quantity and type of resources available to teacher. It has been pointed out that in some poor areas, teachers have to improvise and create their own home made resources in order to continue teaching. And if the teacher's budget is limited, he or she can always rely on tools, such as the dictionary which is a very accessible tool. The black board is an additional piece of equipment that teachers may use, even though they might feel that is standard piece of equipment, (Wood, 2011).

Classroom observation (institution monitoring).

Observations are valuable means for collecting in-depth evidence about such phenomena as the types of language, tasks, communications, and events that take place in second and foreign language classrooms. According to Walker and Adelman (1975, p. 7) "the perfect observer tends to be unobtrusive, static and as far as possible outside the inclusive classroom group." The observer must be passive, almost like he is not there, watching from the outside, keeping a low profile, taking the role of an spectator, instead of an actor. This in turn is beneficial, since as a spectator he or she can observe things that the actor, in this case the teacher cannot see.

Classroom observers run the risk of becoming obtrusive observers, which in turn could be a problem for the research. An obtrusive observer's presence may be felt in the classroom to the degree that the actions observed could not be used as a representation of the class in its usual behavior; as a result, the observed data may have partial validity. In the same manner, an obtrusive observer could also be a problem for the teacher and students in terms of affecting the quality and the outcome of the lessons, by preventing teachers from conveying the lesson to the best of their capability and, subsequently, preventing the students from learning to the best of their capabilities.

Wragg, Wikeley, Wragg, & Haynes (1996) explain that most local education authorities (LEAs) focus their attention on the benefits of classroom observation. Nevertheless, one local education authority fashioned as part of its training resources a list of the pros and cons of classroom observation. The drawbacks recognized were as follow: it can be intimidating, it can encourage 'show' lessons, it can be expensive, it can divert the observer away from his/her own classes.

Finally, the major agreement between local education authorities appears to be that classroom observation gives the greatest chance of stimulating conversation based on teacher's concrete performance in the classroom. Essential elements in this procedure included self-appraisal prior to observation, and additional reflection afterwards on the positive observations made by the evaluator. The succeeding interview ought to spot areas for growth, thus, the main objective being an enhancement in classroom practice.

Students' motivation

Motivation plays a crucial role in student learning, it is usually described as an inner state that stimulates, directs, and preserves behavior. Woolfolk (2007) states that the majority of teachers have reached an understanding that motivating students is one of the critical tasks of teaching. In order to learn, students must be cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally involved in productive class activities. In a teacher's mind, motivated students are usually those who participate actively in class, express interest in the subject matter, and study a great deal. This desire to achieve specific objectives is the foundation of motivation and, if it is strong enough, it would motivate the student to the point where a decision to act is eminent.

Hammer (2007) explained that for adults this could involve enrolling in an English class. On the other hand, for a teenager it could be picking one subject over another for special study. This type of motivation which comes from outside the classrooms and may well be influenced by several of external factors such as family and classmates is often referred to as extrinsic motivation, the motivation that students bring into classroom from outside. On the other hand, we have intrinsic motivation, which is the kind of motivation that is produced by what take place inside the classroom. We should try to find out what the real motives are for the students to learn a second language and in that way make the class interesting and enjoyable.

Learning style

Lightbown and Spada (2006) explained that the term 'learning style' has been used to express an individual's typical, and favoured means of grasping, processing, and holding on to new information and skills. It is common to hear people say that they cannot learn something new unless they see it first. This type of learners would

be categorized as visual learners. On the contrary, people that learn by ear are categorized as 'aural' learners. Similarly, those students that require some type of physical action like role plays, miming, to help them learn are known as 'kinaesthetic' learners. Lightbown and Spada (2006) described the above styles as perceptually – based learning styles.

People have been portrayed as “Field Independent or Field Dependent” depending on how they separate information from general backgrounds or according to their tendency to see things more holistically. The teacher should analyze all the styles individual students have, so he would not fall into the misconception that one particular style or way of learning is wrong, even if it contradicts with the pedagogical approach we have chosen. There are also students that take a “surface processing approach” which emphasizes on remembering the learning materials not understanding them. Woolfolk (2007) also mentions that people who have a “deep-processing approach” perceive learning activities as a way for understanding some fundamental ideas.

Students' intelligence or aptitude to learn English.

Lightbown and Spada (2006) explain that the word 'intelligence' has usually been employed to refer to performance on particular type of exams. These tests are frequently connected with success in school, and a connection among intelligence and second language learning has sometimes been reported.

Gardner (2007) believed that individuals have 'multiple intelligences' and that traditional IQ exam have been proven to measure a limited range of abilities. Amongst the 'multiple intelligences' Gardner includes abilities in the areas of music, interpersonal relations, and athletics, also verbal intelligence which is frequently

related with success in school. Particular skills believed to foresee success in language learning have been studied under the title of language learning 'aptitude'. One of the developers in this area, Carrol (2007) has categorized aptitude in terms of the ability to learn quickly. Therefore, we could theorize that a student with high aptitude might learn with much less effort and faster but other students could also be successful if they persist.

Harmer (2007) shares this view, by illustrating that whereas an individual's mathematical intelligence could be greatly developed, their interpersonal intelligence could be less advanced. On the other hand, a student may have good spatial awareness and musical intelligence, but could be weak mathematically. As a consequence, it is wrong to label somebody as being 'intelligent' or 'unintelligent', since despite the fact we may not have much of a talent for music, that does not mean our capabilities are equally limited in other areas. This lets us know that in our classrooms we may come across a number of different students, each with a different learning style and preferences.

There has been much interest and curiosity in the way English is learned around the world. There has been a vast amount of researchers who have conducted a series of studies regarding the many aspects of learning and teaching the English language and perhaps even the factors that may affect it. In the following section we are going to review a few of these studies.

Sarikoban and Sakizli (2006) analyze the factors that influence a good classroom management, and introduce solutions to the problems. In order to observe the classroom management skills of the teachers, a questionnaire covering the subject areas that were taught during the training program as well as teachers 'own

experiences' was prepared and applied on 30 teachers randomly. The results of the research indicated that most of the teachers were aware of the skills taught during the teacher training program and they usually had good management skills, and it also proved that it is really effective and useful to provide teachers with teacher training programs for classroom management skills.

The authors concluded that it is indispensable for teachers to be acquainted with the student's culture and family conditions in order to design lessons and classroom activities. A cautious study of the factors and their outcome on students learning and their motivation will allow teachers to avoid disorderly conduct

Narayanan, Rajasekaran, and Iyyappan (2008) studied some factors in relation to the learning of English as a second language at the tertiary level. For this study questionnaires were prepared and data was collected mainly in written form. The study attempted to focus on matters related to factors affecting the English learning among engineering and technology students.

The results show that the factors such as motivation, attitude, language anxiety and gender have an unlimited influence on affecting student's English learning.

Aduwa and Iyamu (2006) study surveyed the factors responsible for the poor quality of the teaching of English as a second language in public secondary schools in Nigeria. The central tools used for this study were a questionnaire and observation schedules.

The results demonstrated that environmental factors showed that secondary school students in Nigeria do not learn English in a favorable environment to effective learning. Their schools were overcrowded; the furniture was not

comfortable for proper sitting and that classrooms did not have good lighting and ventilation.

The researcher concluded that public secondary schools in Nigeria are far behind time in offering multiple pathways to the teaching and learning English as a second language.

Khamkhien (2010) researched the relationship among three variables and the language learning approach used by Thai and Vietnamese university students using Oxford's 80 item Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). Two principle objectives of this study were to determine three factors: how gender, motivation and experience in studying English affect the choices of language learning strategies; and to compare the roles of these factors and the pattern of language learning strategy used by Thai and Vietnamese students.

In regards to gender, the findings of the study confirmed that gender difference was not one of the variables contributing to the differences in the choices of language learning strategies. In regards to motivation, the analysis showed a noteworthy effect on the use of language learning strategies due to motivation between the two groups of students in general, and in Thai students in particular.

The result of this study defines that motivation in studying English could lead to benefits to learning a language.

Fewell (2010) studied the language learning strategy (LLS) application by Japanese college EFL students. The study assessed the variety of data to define patterns of LLS used between two groups of students with the direction of a Japanese translated version of the SILL questionnaire, a computerized English proficiency test, and a short background questionnaire

The author concluded that visible similarities of patterns in the use of language learner strategies shared by high proficiency students and the noted distinctions shared by low proficiency students establish the significance of LLS as a prominent variable associated in some degree to eventual success or failure in language learning.

Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

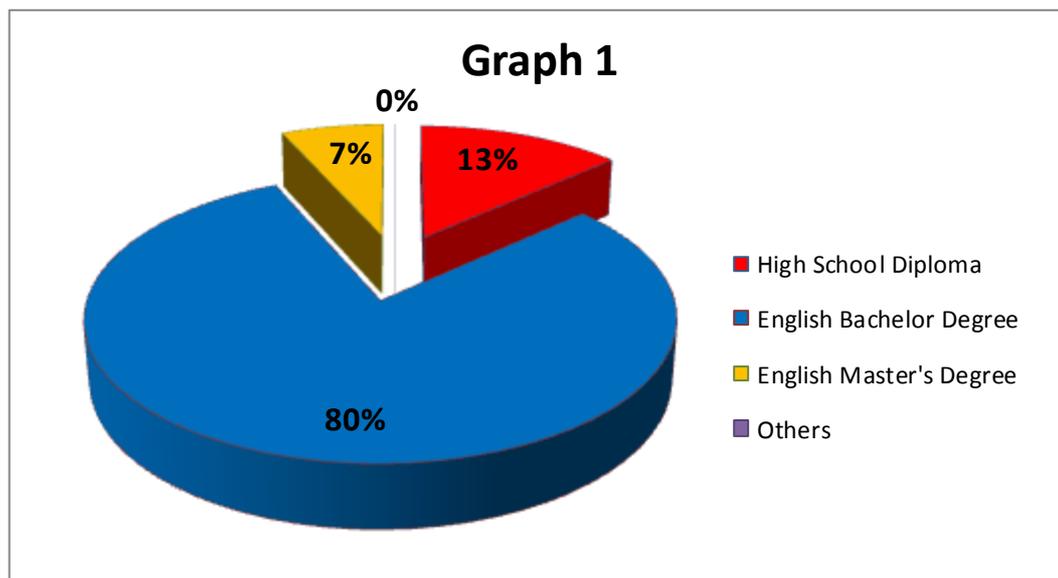
This research determines the factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools.

Teaching a foreign language represents a challenge that involves many variables, not only teachers and pupils, but also the environment in which they take place. For this reason, the factors that involve teachers, students, classrooms, and educational institutions have been taken into account.

Quantitative Analysis

Factors Concerning Teachers

Which level of education do teachers have?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

For this particular question it was found that from the fifteen teachers interviewed, 80% have an English Bachelor's degree, 7% are going to get a Master's Degree in English, while the remaining 13% of them have obtained at least

a high school diploma. It is important to mention that no documents, diplomas, or certificates had been presented to support these statements.

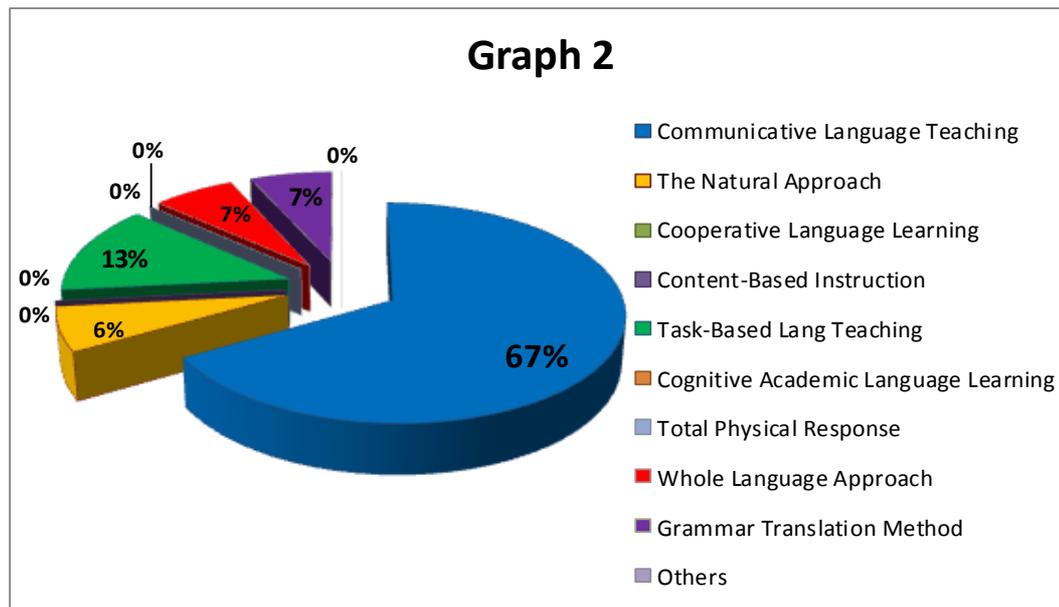
In order to complete the interpretation of the graph showed, it is necessary to say that nowadays, there is not any teacher - admitted in public schools having only a High School Diploma; that is because the Bachelors' Degree has been established by the educational authorities as the minimum level required, and for this particular subject it must be obtained in English.

According to this analysis we can establish that students in the five observed high schools are being educated by teachers with a College or University degree, which in a sense guarantees the teacher– student learning process.

As an illustration of that idea, it can be cited Afshari, Bakar, & Su Luan, (2009) who have agreed that professional development of teachers is the central point of any successful technology and educational program.

Most teachers said in their interview that they have enrolled in training and updating programs which are coordinated by the Ministry of Education, and carried out with the cooperation of public and private Universities together with some English training centers. Besides, the Educational Institutions have made their bit by demanding a third level degree to every single teacher by the end of year 2013.

Which of the following methods was used in the observed classes?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

For this particular question it was observed during the classes that 67% of the teachers apply the Communicative Language Teaching Approach, which emphasizes the interactivity of the students and the ultimate objective by forming sentences according to a topic or purpose (Richards & Rodgers 2001). The evidence indicates that the previous mentioned approach is the one that most teachers and students felt comfortable with.

In the same manner, 13% of teachers preferred using the Task-Based Language Teaching Approach, while, seven percent choose the Whole Language Approach. The same number of teachers selected the Content Based Instruction Method, and finally, 6% selected the Natural Approach as means of transferring knowledge to their students .

In the classes observed it was noticed that teachers preferred the Communicative Language Teaching Approach, since it allowed them to be creative.

In other words, to make the class more interactive or as they have described it “a playground” where a student can learn by doing fun-tasks. For example, one of the favourite tasks being carried out in this approach is role playing. Teachers accomplish this by elaborating different scenarios with the main objective being motivation.

Perhaps it is important to consider that the essence of this approach combines learning activities such as: translation, group work, recording, transcription, analysis, reflection and observation, listening and free conversation.

Harmer (2007) explains that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), has two main guiding principles: the first one is that language is not just patterns of grammar with vocabulary items slotted in, but also involves language functions such as inviting, agreeing and disagreeing, suggesting, etc, which students should learn how to perform using a variety of language exponents.

During the observation of the fifteen teachers during their classes it was found that most of them applied group work. In some cases, it involved a group of students facing among one another, presenting a message in their mother tongue to the teacher. The message then was translated into English which then had to be presented to the classmates. A specific student repeated the message in the Target-Language addressing it to another peer with whom he wanted to communicate with.

A small group of teachers preferred to apply ‘Translation’. In order to achieve this goal, they organize the class into a circle. One of the students was chosen to utter an expression he wanted to hear in English. Then, the teacher translated it and after this the class repeated the expression in English.

According to the research that was conducted and once the evidence and questionnaires were analyzed it was established that the second principle of

Communicative Language Teaching is when students get enough exposure to language and sufficient opportunities to apply the language or use it in real life situations, and also, when they are motivated—then language learning will take care of itself.

As a result, the focus of Communicative Language Teaching has been on students communicating real messages, and not just grammatically controlled language (Harmer, 2007).

In the same manner, it was observed that 13% of the teachers applied the Task-Based language Teaching Approach. It was observed that teachers favoured this method, since, it allowed them to generate physical activity from the students. Tasks issued in class required students to move around the classroom, which in turn ended up promoting team work.

Similarly, it was observed that students seem at ease with this method. In general terms, throughout the majority of the lessons teachers applied real-world situations, such as short dialogues between a customer and a waiter in a restaurant, or a simulated flight attendant and a passenger conversation.

On the other hand, it was observed that 7% of teachers used the Whole Language Approach. According to what was observed teachers applied this method at times to make students participate actively in class by working on topics or materials brought to class by the students. The topics selected were of interest to the students, which in turn made the classes run a lot smoother. Also, some teachers preferred organizing the class into small groups for reading and writing, such, story writing, like for instance: What happened last night on your way home?

Richards & Rogers (2001) explained that the Whole language approach pictures or reflects language organization from the interactional perspective. Thus, language is viewed as an essential tool applied for important purposes, and also for carrying out real functions.

In the same manner, it was viewed that seven percent of teachers used the Grammar Translation Method. It was observed that teachers applied this method, because it made it easier to reach out or to get their message across the students who had a very low level of English. Basically, the entire class was taught in Spanish. There was no emphasis made on correcting the students pronunciation.

According to Richards & Rodgers (2001) the Grammar Translation Method is a manner of studying a language which handles the language initially through comprehensive analysis of its grammar rules, and then it is followed by application of this knowledge to the undertaking of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language.

Finally, six percent of the teachers applied the Natural Approach during the classes observed, which consists of much of drills, repetition and pantomime, in a way is much similar to the Direct Method (Richards & Rodgers 2001).

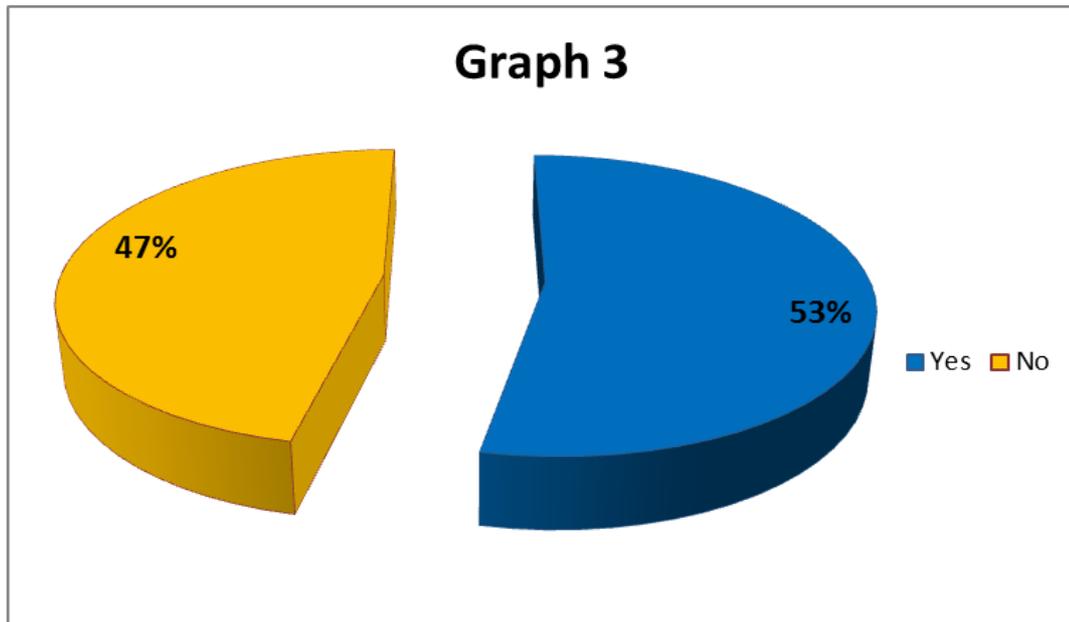
As most students observed had a 'basic level' of English, this method represented the most appropriate according to their teachers. Besides, most teachers from the five high schools applied the Natural Approach within their classes, because it helps to improve their students knowledge of the English language. In other words, students which are at basic level, improved gradually, until they become intermediates.

Teachers observed preferred to use pictures and role plays during classes. These activities made students feel more relaxed, and it generated a friendly atmosphere in the classroom, resulting in more class participation.

The analysis of question number 4 from the student's questionnaire is a clear illustration of this, in which, most students agreed with the method the teachers used to teach English in classes. The level of student's knowledge is really important to consider, most of the students had only a basic level in the case of the schools visited.

Through observation and additional questions after the classes, the researcher found out that most of the knowledge acquired by the students out of school has come from movies, pop music, and Internet making the choice of the right approach a 'compulsory' task for the teacher.

Do teachers use whole-group activities to teach their lessons?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

This graph exemplifies the predilections of the teachers to use whole group activities to teach their lessons

For this particular question it was observed during each class that 53% of teachers use whole group activities to teach their lessons, while the remaining 47% apply different techniques.

Once we analyzed the teacher's questionnaires, the observation sheets, and the student's questionnaires, we could determine that the principal reasons that were provided by teachers for the use of whole group activities were because it allowed them to give instructions and explained the lesson equally to the entire group of students. Secondly, they use it for choral repetition, to reinforce the lesson and third, because students felt more secure to perform class tasks in an environment in which they felt that they were not going to be criticize or look down upon.

Even though, the teachers provided a variety of options about the reasons why they preferred to use whole group activities to teach their lessons, they left one out. Perhaps, they were a bit reluctant to say it, but during the observations it became too evident, that the main reason was class size, which in some of the high schools visited during this study surpassed the amount of 50 students per classroom.

The size of the class made whole group activities a necessity, especially if the teacher wanted the lesson to be covered within the time limit. In other words, the 'key factor' was time; there was not enough time to work with other activities and there was not enough time for teachers to dedicate individual attention to their students.

According to the students interviewed, much of the whole group activities that took place during the lessons allowed them to gain confidence in themselves. It allowed them to grow gradually, to stop feeling anxious or even in some cases 'scared' so their participation in class has become more natural, leaving the fear of speaking in front of the class aside, putting aside their stage fright. They also explain that it motivated them to learn the English language. As it is well known, motivation is important as the interests and goals of every student differ from one another, so it is important to keep every one of them interested and hooked to it.

Woolfolk (2007) states that the majority of teachers have reached an understanding that motivating students is one of the critical tasks of teaching as well as engaging their attention to the subject.

During this study it was observed that in order to learn, students must be cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally involved in productive class activities. The research should try to find out what the real motives are for the students to learn

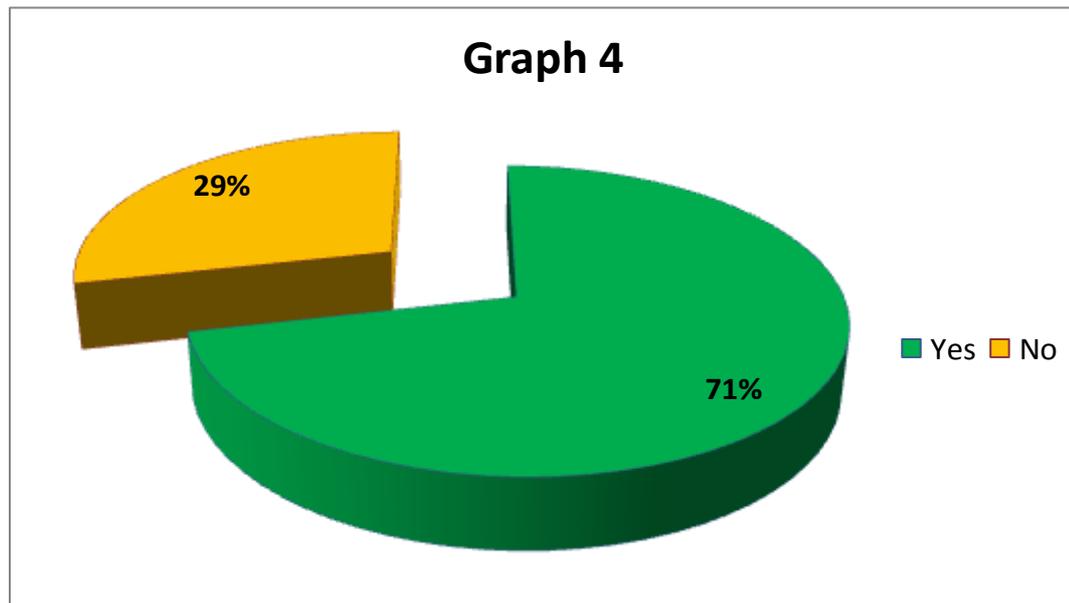
a second language and make the class interesting and enjoyable. It also needs to encounter what topics they would like to discuss, topics of personal interest such as music, films, cars, countries, sports. The main job is to provoke interest and involvement in the subject even if their peers are quite reluctant to do so.

In the questionnaire provided to the students, all of the 15 peers interviewed agreed with the view that the activities applied by their teachers motivated them to learn English.

Students were asked to explain their answers regarding their motivation; they responded that they felt motivated because their teachers were very understanding with the mistakes they made during class participation. In some cases they said, when homework needed to be reviewed, their teacher did it in such a way so that they could see and correct their mistakes on their own.

This behavior the students perceived from their teachers made them more relaxed, at ease with themselves. As a result the students were eager to come to English class.

Do teachers use individual activities to teach their lessons?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

In this particular question 71% of the teachers interviewed indicated that they use individual activities to teach their lessons. Meanwhile, the remaining 29% of the teachers preferred other types of activities to teach their lessons, for example whole group, pair work, role play, etc.

After examining the teacher's questionnaires, the observation sheets and the student's questionnaires, it could be established that the principal reasons that were provided by teachers for the use of individual activities to teach their lessons was that they allowed them to evaluate the level of understanding of each student.

According to the teachers interviewed, by using individual activities to teach their lessons they are able to assess the level of English knowledge each student has appropriately. Teachers also expressed that the use of this technique provide students the opportunity to express their own ideas on the tasks, and in order to check their accurate understanding of the matter.

This in turn would allow them to design or take the appropriate steps to improve that particular student's needs. Regarding this point, some teachers manifested that nowadays many educators around the country focus all the activities on the language itself, that is, grammar and structure. Thus, their main goal is to get their student to be able 'to pass an exam'.

On the other hand, they considered that the main focus should be on the 'messages' carried by the language and that was the reason why they chose individual activities over whole groups activities.

Even though, much of the teachers answered and checked that they work on individual activities, during the observations it was noticeable that not all of them applied it, mainly because of the size of the class, which in some cases surpassed 50 students in one room.

Perhaps, this particular point is of essence in Ecuadorian public high schools today, mainly because of the number of students that a public school teacher has to handle on a daily basis, which does not allow him or her to pay much individual attention to one particular student, even if they have all the good intention to do it, there is simply not enough time, which is 40 minutes or 45 in the best cases. It was observed that when teachers wished to review materials, such as quizzes, homework, or simply run an individual performance quiz, they did it in two class periods, in other words in 80 minutes. For this reason, they preferred group activities to teach their lessons.

Nevertheless, watching these teachers managing their class time during the lessons to the point of stretching or extending the time given at its maximum level

was of great satisfaction and motivation, and at the same time of respect, since it demonstrated the core of teaching and what this is about.

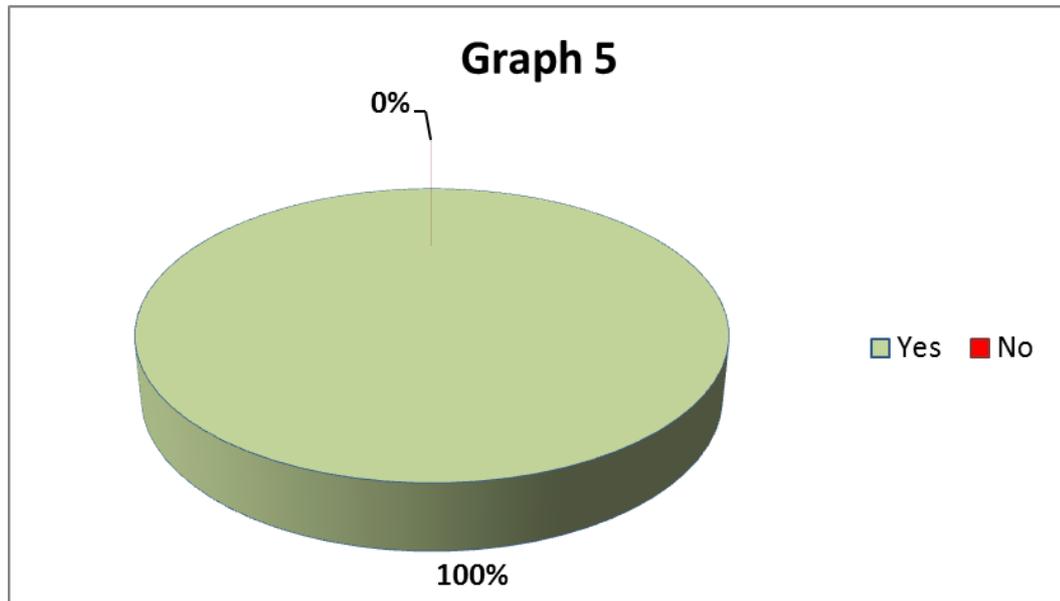
On the other hand, 10 students interviewed explained that they preferred individual work because it taught them to be more appreciative of their work; it showed them their true level of learning, whether or not they are learning English.

Almost all students have agreed on the individual activities practiced in class motivate them to learn, and they have also admitted that they like the way their teacher teach English.

In the same way the students interviewed had it clear in their minds that it was extremely complicated for their teachers to plan individual activities during the class. They came to the same conclusion, there was not enough time or space for that matter as one of them commented in the interview that sometimes a teacher cannot even walk about the classroom as it is piled up with so many students-desks.

Sadly, the researcher could see that this is one of the realities Ecuadorian High Schools face nowadays; overcrowded classrooms limit the space for the peers to develop their true potential.

Do teachers use group work activities to teach their lessons?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

Regarding group work activities it was found that one hundred percent of teachers use this technique to teach their lessons. As it is well known, groups are a fundamental part of human existence. As Kochlar (1985) mentioned, groups are important as they bring together three main key factors: the number of individuals involved, connection, and relationship.

The evidence obtained during the observations lets us know that teachers preferred the use of group work activities to teach their lessons over the individual ones mainly because students felt more comfortable and also because they encouraged team work among the students. Because, it helps them have a better control of the students' attention and discipline. Group activities allow teachers to have an overall view of how the entire class is responding to the ongoing curricula. Thus, it is the best way to get a feedback from the classroom as a whole. Harmer (2007) indicates that group work is often used in large classes to give students more

opportunities for interaction than they would otherwise get with whole-class teaching. Finally, teachers stated that due to lack of time activities come to a hold sometimes and in some cases they had to 'double the time' in order to complete them.

According to the students interviewed, group activities that took place during their classes allowed them to gain confidence in themselves. Furthermore, it has allowed them to acquire knowledge gradually, to be more receptive to new information, so their participation in class has become better. Also, it helped them to leave the fear of speaking in front of the class aside, putting aside their stage fright as they have had to communicate with their peers. They have also explained that it is more motivating to learn the English language in this way.

As it is well known, motivation is important because the interests and goals of every student differ from one another, so it is important to keep them in the loop by leaving some of the next class as part of their homework. In the same way students interviewed expressed that the use of group work was a more relaxed way of working in class. In other words, a more practical form of learning, because it allowed all the students to express their opinions, stimulate their class participation, thus, making more enjoyable classes and some of them less tiring.

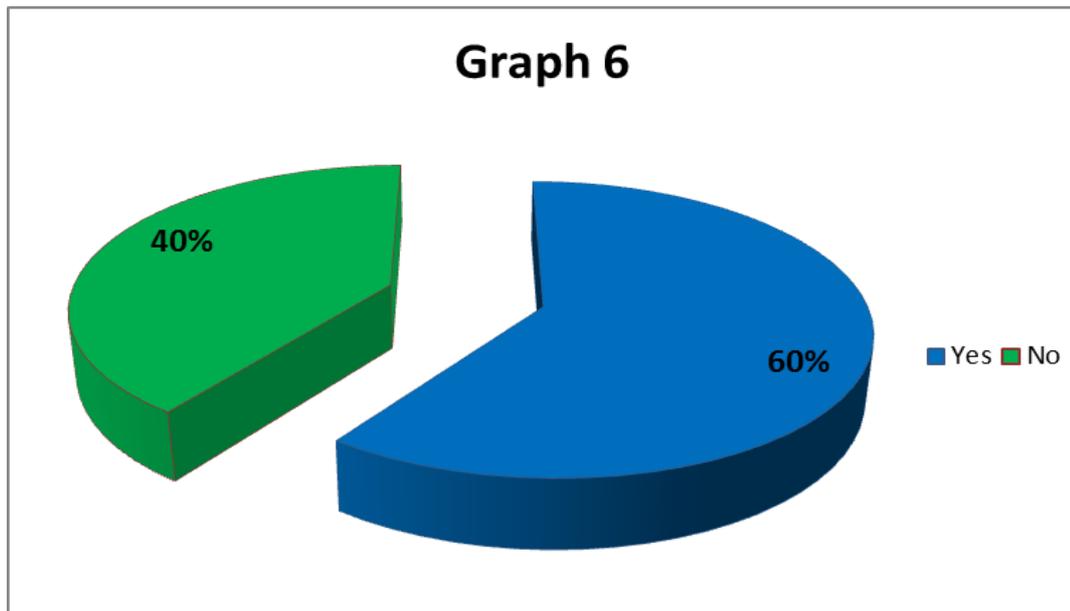
Woolfolk (2007) clarified that the tasks that teachers set affect motivation. Additionally, when students come across tasks that are connected to their interest, encourage their interest, or are concerned to real-life situations, they are more liable to be motivated to learn.

Perhaps it is important to mention that by using this activity it brought out those students that were reluctant to participate in class activities, because of shyness, fear of being laughed at or just lack of interest in the class.

According to the observation taken place on-site, one thing that needs to be mentioned as well is the fact that most of the material used for these activities were photocopies from other texts as it was explained that many students had no enough means to acquire them. These photocopies were sometimes provided by their own teachers as an act of good will.

The lack of proper teaching resources such as good books, work-books, and realia makes it harder for the teacher because students feel motivated by colours and not by uninteresting pieces of paper. However, photocopies were issued to the students.. When asked about this matter, one teacher mentioned that many students feel it is normal to photocopy someone else's book little by little. By doing this, teachers were trying to ensure that students appreciate the work of someone else by trying to get at least the book from the library.

Do teachers use English most of the time in their classes?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

In this particular question it was noted that 60% of the teachers had answered 'yes' in the questionnaire, while the other 40% answered 'no'. This nearly half and a half responses raised a lot of curiosity and many doubts arised regarding this matter.

During the class observations, most of the teachers used English for small period's of time. The target language was used for giving basic instrcutions, such as, "sit down", "please" or "pay attention" which are some of the most common expressions used in schools today.

According to Gower, Phillips, & Walters (1995) the balance between the TTT (teacher talking time) and the STT (student talking time) depends on the type of lesson and activities involved, and on the level of students. That means that even though the teachers might have the best of intentions in trying to get their students to speak in English or be surrounded in an English-speaking environment, sometimes it

is best to go step by step, even if it means to speak more the native language of the student, in this case Spanish.

The observations have shown us that most of the classes were in fact, conducted in Spanish and that even so, much of the information presented to the students was sometimes confusing for them. The result of this study has also raised concerns as to whether the approach used by the teacher is the correct one.

It was noted that some students asked the teacher to repeat the questions, only to be answered back by themselves in Spanish. The commands given by the teacher to them were more satisfactory to see as they performed well in this case, proving that their listening skill were far better than their speaking skill.

When asking about this dilemma, the answer was mixed by the teachers, some of them answered it is in the student's nature to speak Spanish, or even blaming again the lack of time for their lessons.

Perhaps it is important to take into consideration that the level of knowledge of the English language that the students possess had a direct impact on the amount of time that the teacher use English in their classes.

According to the evidence gathered a great number of students had a basic level of English knowledge, this resulted in teachers having to compensate some time in explaining the parts or most of the classes in Spanish, since they had to make sure all their students were getting the message across. Therefore, knowing your student's previous knowledge of the language is of great significance. This is essential in order for the teacher to accurately direct his or her class in a manner in which all students are getting the message or the topic of the class in that given day.

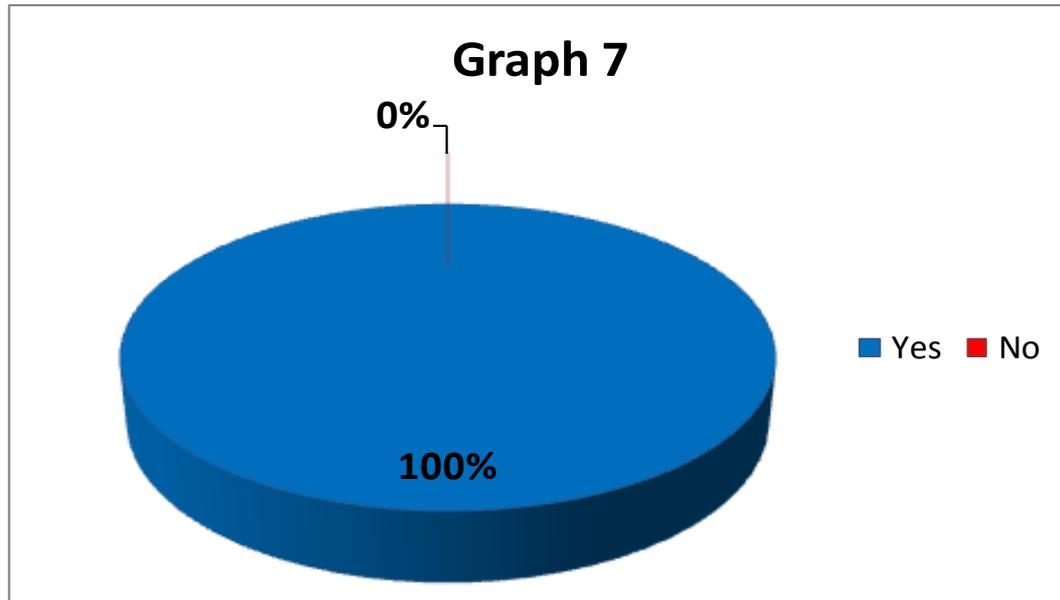
This prior knowledge allowed the teacher to move along the class without having to constantly repeat herself and allowed her to put into action all the skills and tools that we have as teachers to convey the English Language.

Regarding this aspect, one important issue to consider is that for most of the students in those classrooms that hour is the only contact or exposure to the language in the whole week.

Conversely, there were teachers that simply felt more comfortable using Spanish to run their classes. This created a doubt in the level of English they had. Some teachers explained that they need to use Spanish in class because their pupils do not quite understand their explanations. Besides, they stated that there is a number of students that simply 'are not interested' and that the goal with them is to fulfill with the curricula.

In contrast, students think that the teachers do not give clear instructions and they ask them to speak in Spanish, so translation becomes necessary. According to recent studies sometimes it is necessary to translate 'parts' of the lesson, especially with words that cannot be described by mimics or draws, for example, 'auxiliaries such as would, should, does' but certainly not the whole class. The student needs to feel the need or have a sense for this matter of understanding another human being trying to communicate with him, so he feels the necessity of finding out what he really gathers as a feedback (Woolfolk, 2007).

Do teachers plan their lessons?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

For this particular question it was observed during the class that 100% of teachers answered that they plan their lessons. This in sense gurantees that at least in the five public high schools observed, the teaching – learning porcess was being covered. Harmer (2007) explains that for teachers, a plan gives the lesson a framework, an overall shape.

Perhaps it is important to mention that noticing a well prepared teacher is not a diifcult thing to do, basically all one has to do is to wacth him or her at the beginning of the class, which is when he or she will take out his or her lesson plan. This will demonstrate that the teacher has dedicated time, and energy, to plan the lesson for this particular class. Also, that he or she has taken into consideration all the areas involved, especially the students.

Harmer (2007) illustrates this by underlining that for students, evidence of a plan shows that the teacher has devoted time to thinking about the class. It strongly

recommended a level of professionalism and a dedication to the kind of research they might reasonably expect.

Sarikoban and Sakizli (2006) concluded that it is indispensable for teachers to be acquainted with the student's culture and family conditions in order to design lessons and classroom activities.

In the same manner, Gower, Phillips and Walters (2005) explained that the way a lesson is elaborated is up to each individual, in this case to the teacher who is going to be presented to the classroom in front of the student.

The observed teachers conducted their classes in a smooth manner, basically every task was coordinated in such manner that it took only the sufficient amount of time to explain, review, and then continue to the next task. If it was necessary to adjust for some reason they did it, but without deviating from the plan. In other words, there was little room for improvisation.

Harmer (2007) explained that in the classroom, a plan helps to remind teachers what they intended to do especially if they get distracted or momentarily forget what they had proposed. In consequence, the teachers had an interesting mix of activities that had high participation levels from the students within the classroom.

Finally, we must underline the importance of having a well-balanced lesson plan. Since, teachers could come across students who are more advanced in English than some of their classmates. It is natural for more knowledgeable students to try "over excel" in comparison to the rest of the class, but here the teacher must take control and find an efficient way to allow all students to participate in the lesson, this

can present a challenge for any teacher. But by making the correct application of the tools that are available for us, we can convey meaning appropriately.

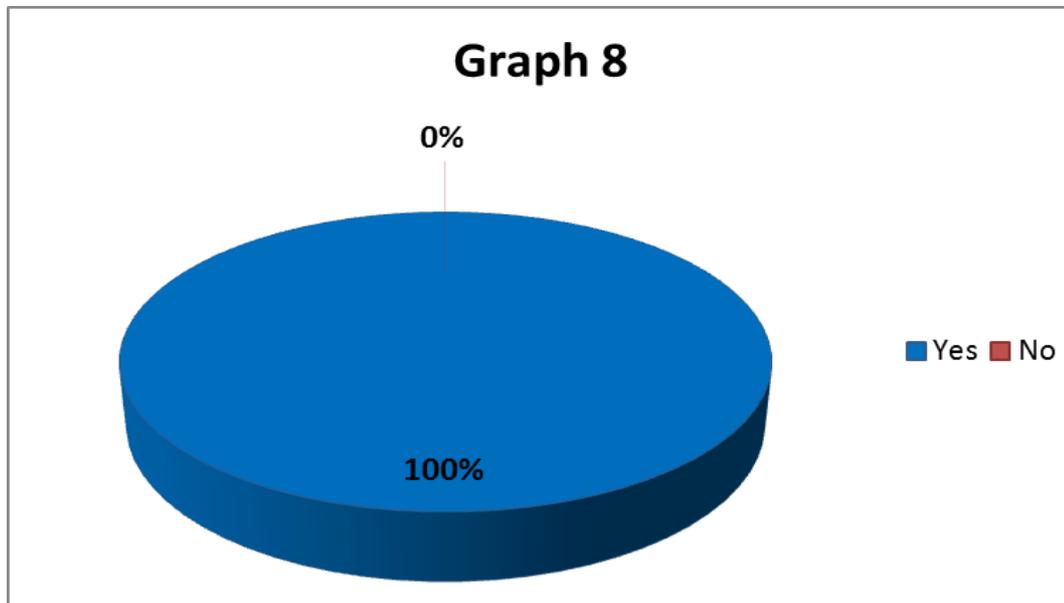
In contrast, from the 15 students interviewed in this research, 8 of them argued that the teachers were properly prepared or designated the sufficient time in the developing of a specific task, while the remaining 7 did not believe that the teachers came prepared or designated the sufficient time in developing a task in class.

When asked about the lesson plans of the teacher as well as their organization to carry the class, many students answered that unfortunately, they had not seen any sort of lesson plan that had been described by the researcher. When explained what it means they said we all could be referring to the book the teachers signed at the end of the class.

Bearing this in mind, the researcher asked for the lesson plans at the end of the class to the supervisor of the floor, and handed a lectionary, where the title of the unit as well as the activities done in class were recorded.

It is important to say that students also had a right to see these plans as well as parents, so they can compare at the end of each term whether the goals were achieved or not.

Do teachers consider aspects such as discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction to teach their lessons?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

The answer obtained for this question was that 100% of the teachers in the public high schools observed considered aspects such as discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction to teach their lessons.

This is perhaps the one 'question' that involves all the variables in this study: teachers, students, classrooms and how they are managed, and finally the educational Institutions as well, as it reflects responsibility in all of these components.

For each of these aspects to be evaluated in the observation format, it is necessary to consider some points of relevance. For one thing , when teachers give their classes they are not just teaching students, but to 'individuals' who probably have different culture, religion, knowledge in the subject which can also be 'accurate' or 'innacurate' but shapes the learning nevertheless (Macleod & Fisher & Hoover, 2003).

It must be stated that the researcher documented some issues encountered along the way with the lessons as the observation was taking place on-site as the classes were taken place.

Teachers and students displayed a sense of punctuality that surpassed the researcher's expectations. Classes started on time and in some cases these lessons were giving just before break time where again timing was respected, so it can be concluded that in this aspect these schools are well under way.

Regarding the aspect of feedback one of the things to consider is that there was only 'one class observed' per teacher so it might be possible that feedback is collected in other dates or through other means. One interesting comment on that is that a teacher in particular has mentioned that they do it through some sort of survey every quarter, that is every three months. Besides, the presence of the researcher on-site could have well influenced on the student's comments about the teacher.

The aspect of instruction on the other hand was well emphasized in the way the lessons were performed by the teachers and how they managed the contents for the lessons given. For this aspect, the researcher observed that there was a big gap between two groups of teachers, the ones who already possess a third level or currently studying a fourth level degree and the ones with only a high school diploma. It was an easy matter to spot elements such as educational psychology, pedagogy, pragmatism (which for the researcher was absolutely important as it induces the peer to look for other ways of searching knowledge) in the former group of teachers, whereas for the latter composed of thirteen percent it was only the empirical knowledge that was put into action. For instance, when questioned about the meaning of certain words, one of the teachers with a third level degree used realia

to answered, while in other class a teacher who claimed to have a high school diploma just gave the translation pure and simpli in Spanish.

Of all the aspects considered by the teachers observed, the one that all of them emphasized on was discipline.

Discipline is perhaps one topic that troubles the mind of the great majority of public school teachers. Since, it is of great importance, because it could determined the outcome of the class, it could affect the learning process of the students, by having a direct impact on the timing, feedback, and instruction that the teacher might have planned for that particular day.

Most teacher that had one through the interview process uderlined the importance of taking control of the class, especially in classrooms like theirs, in which the amount of students does not allowed for much individual attention. For instance, a young teacher had to take control of a class which colud have gone out of his hands, just because of a pair students wanted to impress the rest of their classmates by behaving in an unappreciated manner, being rude. The researcher calculated the amount of time wasted in this awkward situation which came to be an staggering 15 minutes. In all that time peers were left 'hanging on' in their chores, and so as they were left on their own another quarrel came to show among them.

It is important to note that a teacher cannot successfully control his class unless he himself is not in control. Of course this is also a concern of the parents and the Educational Institution represented by its Principal.

There are many reasons why students behave in such manner, to mention just a few, these could be personal problems, proper behaviour according to their age,

etc. but here the study would like to focus on one that has been well overlooked and that is the teaching style.

If the teacher does not reach the interest in all the students, the class becomes boring and therefore the peers will become bored, tired, and restless. Teachers could come up with a few ideas in order to get the attention of the students but more importantly, their respect.

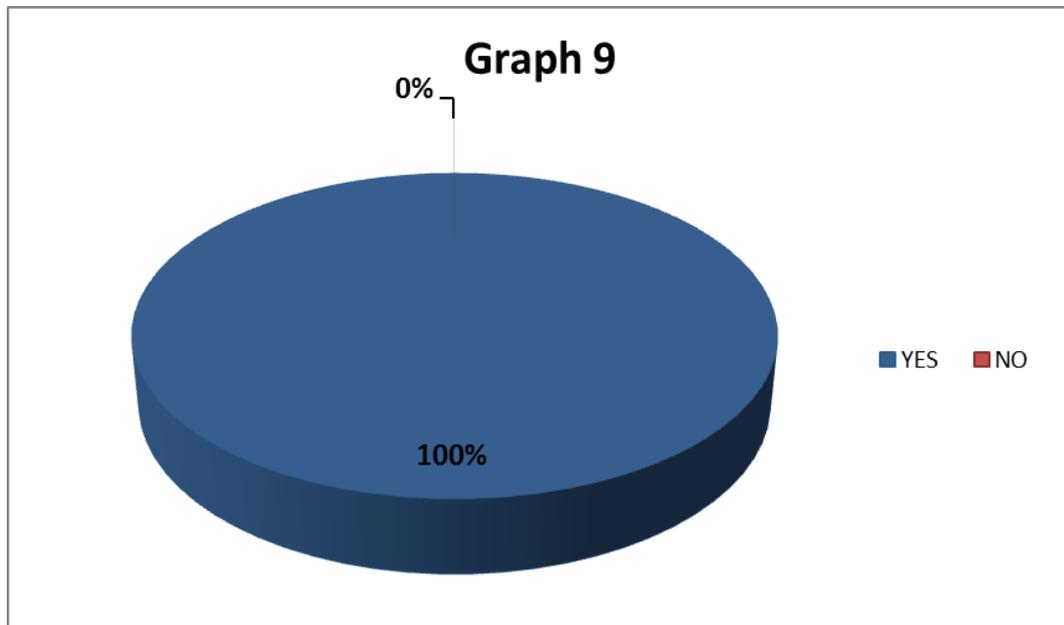
Some teachers throughout the world have come up with few ideas to control their students. For example, certificates of good conduct or trade-in for prizes to be exchanged afterwards. Sarikoban and Sakizli (2006) concluded that a cautious study of the factors and their outcome on students learning and their motivation will allow teachers to avoid a disorderly conduct.

In the same way, the 15 students interviewed in this research had it clear in their minds that their teacher's control of the discipline in their classroom was appropriate. Of course when treating this issue, many students took advantage of this and started calling out some of their classmates' names.

The teacher has also said that many students face the problem of 'mono parental family', in many cases just the mother has to work and keep an eye on things such as education at the same time.

Factors Concerning Students

Do teachers consider students' needs to teach English successfully?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

When asking a question as this one, it is easy to know the answer straight away from the teachers. One hundred percent of them consider students' needs to teach English successfully according to their answer on paper.

The term 'students needs' is complex as it describes a broad range of specific learning difficulties and so there is a great deal to explore in this field. For instance, it might refer to a group of students with impaired disabilities, dyslexia, or other health conditions that in some cases not even the students themselves know about.

Students with 'dyslexia' for example might not have the same needs. When asked if the schools possess written forms to disclose this information about the students no answer was given by the Institutions and the same was shown when the teachers were asked if they had knowledge of any condition with a student in particular in their classrooms.

In contrast, as well as considering aspects in both physical and mental health, many former studies suggest that in some cases problems at home such as financial issues, parents filing for divorce or kids having to suffer the loss of parents due to emigration issues or death are matters that need to be considered as well in order to improve the teaching and learning process (Woolfolk, 2010).

Also the term students' needs can be referred to the settings where the class takes place. By this, we mean the different areas where English is conducted, for example, a round trip to the school might spark the interest of students to know more vocabulary for things that surround the area (Khamkhein, 2010).

The group of teachers observed during this study have demonstrated by the way they handled themselves during their classes that they had spend time analyzing more than one learning style for the peers that were present in their lesson. Basically the term 'learning style' has been used to express an individual's usual and preferred means of grasping, processing, and holding on to new information and skills. This had permitted them to supply students with the appropriate learning environment. It is also important to comment that questions done by the teachers throughout the lesson were made such as: Do you guys have any questions? Do you want me to repeat this part? Was this clear? Students then nodded in approval or simply did not answer at all.

One case that came to the researcher's attention was that students most often asked questions when they were involved in a particular activity or task in which they felt more comfortable with than when the teacher explained things by a monologue.

Evertson and Veinstein (2006) suggested that the appropriate physical setting, task assignment, discourse management must be considered in order to produce the best results of the intended curriculum.

Lightbown and Spada (2006) best illustrated this by explaining that the teacher should analyze all the styles individual students have, so he would not fall into the misconception that one particular style or way of learning is wrong, even if it contradicts with the pedagogical approach we have chosen.

This is essential in order for the teacher to accurately direct his or her class in a manner in which all the students are getting the message of the class, and this could be accomplished simply by the ability of the teacher to convey a positive attitude. A teacher enjoying himself or herself makes the classroom comfortable and relaxed, which results in having an extremely eager class to participate in the lesson.

When we refer to a 'comfortable class' we also mean a class which is composed with all the extra elements such as good ventilation, class space, positive attitude, realia, etc.

It's also important to note that the personality of each individual is different and plays a huge part in the development of the class. Some students are shy while others possess a more outgoing attitude towards the teacher. Mostly the quiet ones feel as though they are left behind when the teacher starts to praise the good performance of the others, this is especially difficult to deal with when the uncertainty of not knowing how to get the message across strikes at the teacher involved.

Culture is another aspect that need to be considered when an individual tries to get a message across. Woodward (2001) observed:

“By culture I mean the features that characterise the way of life of a particular group of people, whether they are young or old, women or men, national, language or ethnic groups. Culture is about difference and variability and thus contains both the potencial for opportunity and for conflict. (p.102) “

It is important to take this into consideration when doing tasks like role playing, or even for the more simple tasks such as writing a poem because ‘culture’ plays a huge rol in this matter. For instance, in a role play task a teacher asked a student to use the structure ‘forgive me for’ to a priest in a church choosing two students randomly only to discover that one of them was not catholic.

During the class observations, it was clear that each classroom was composed of youngers of different personalities, aptitudes, and in some cases even different ages. Mostly the younger ones showed a lot more attetion and respect towards the teacher than the older ones.

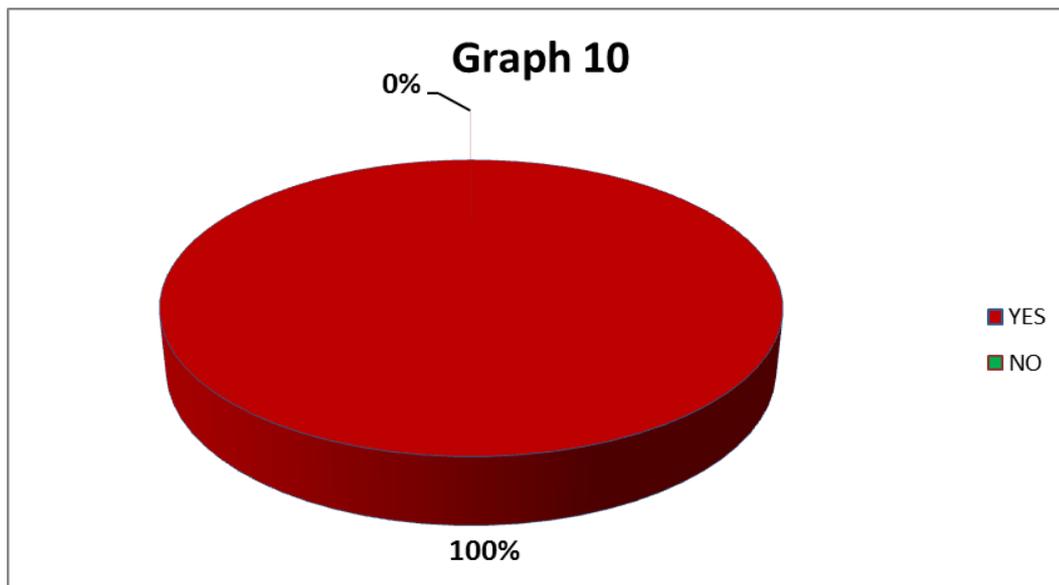
Another important factor detected through observation was ‘ethnicity’ and ‘Demographic factors’. The researcher could witness students from many parts of Ecuador and also some from some countries such as Colombia, Cuba, and Peru.

Immigration from these families to certain communities in Guayaquil makes the job more interesting - a teacher added, because it makes teachers find out a bit more about their culture, and of course after this to try to make English an interesting subject for them all (Holmes, 2008). Besides, some of the peers travel great distances in order to get to the school, which makes the task of keeping them ‘active’ a lot more difficult as when they arrive they are already tired.

Based on the observations, and taking in consideration the variety of activities applied by the teachers, and the student’s reactions to them, it is clear that the

teachers took into consideration all of the students necessities in order to convey their knowledge about them, as well as the consideration of all the different learning styles that could be present within the classroom.

Do teachers consider Students' level to teach English successfully?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

When talking about the term students' level it is the same as the term referred to as Language proficiency of the students. This question aims to establish whether the observed teachers acknowledge and put into practice this fact into the analysis, preparation and more importantly the activities in classes. In this case, 100% of teachers claimed to consider students' level to teach English successfully in the questionnaire provided to them.

By considering the student's level this study intends to demonstrate the different cognitive approaches by which the teacher gets the students' attention by using diverse techniques and methods as peers displayed different levels of Language Proficiency among themselves during the observed classes.

The study has revealed that in some cases, some of the students were eager to show some skills and abilities they have already acquired somewhere else.

Getting to know the level of every student is not an easy matter, one suggestion to overcome this is to assess each student periodically by handing in placement test to show how much they have advanced in their skills.

All teachers interviewed and observed were aware of the students' level of Language Proficiency in English, which in turn allowed them to guide their lesson accordingly. In this case classes mostly oriented to a basic level of English student, according to what it was identified during the analysis of question two of the observation sheet.

According to the information collected during this study it can be stated that the teachers observed considered their student's prior knowledge of the language when it came down to planning their lesson; mainly because, there were designed in such a way that it contained a diverse group of student's activities, such as listening, direct instruction, reading, writing, discussing, illustrating, and as a result it created an interesting mixture of tasks that produced a high participation level in the classroom, which is the objective of every teacher, to have all students engage in class activities, assuring in this way that at least every single student leaves the classroom with some kind of knowledge of English, even if it is a couple words.

Taking into account the amount of activities each teacher brought in for the students to develop, it was clear that preparation was done not only for one sector of the group, or only addressed by one level, but for a diversity of them.

One interesting feature was to see that in one particular lesson the teacher organized groups of five to work in class, organizing a total of 9 groups. The key to

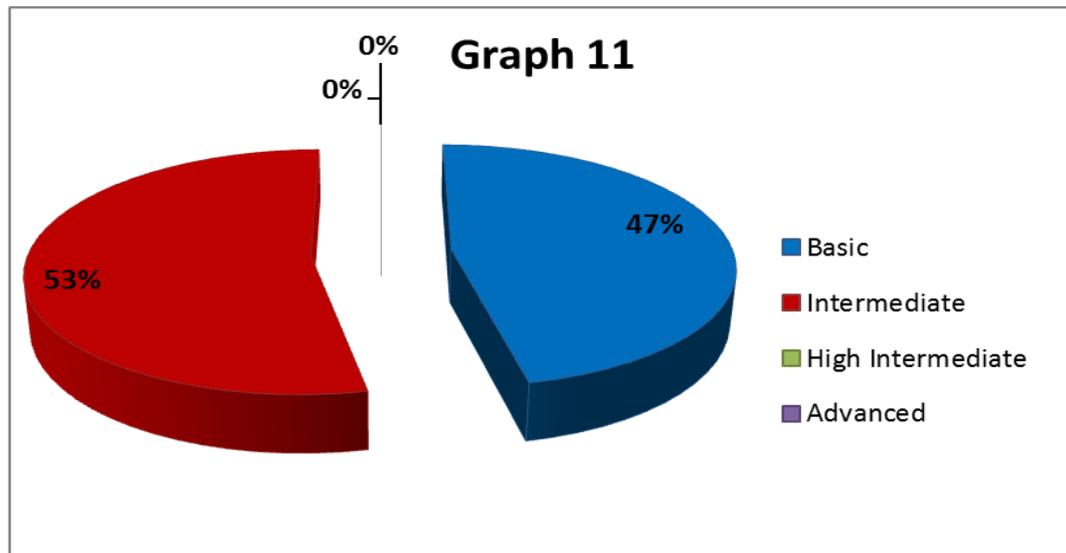
make everyone participate was that these groups were gathered and composed of at least one student who had clearly shown very good skills beforehand; so this student helped his fellow classmate in the group.

It is important to note that teachers need to be ‘especially careful’ about how they respond to low-achieving students during class discussions and “communicate to all students that the teacher believe they can learn” (Khamkhien, 2010, p. 485).

According to the information collected during this study it can be stated that the the answers provided by the teachers regarding the students’ level of Language Proficiency in English was not accurate.

According to the teachers questionnaire, 8 students were in the intermediate level, while 7 were at a basic level. In contrast, during the class observations it was noticed that 12 students were at the basic level, meanwhile the remaining 3 students were at the intermediate level of Language Proficiency in English.

Which is the level of the Students?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

In this particular question it was observed that 53% of students had an intermediate level and 47% of them had a basic level of English. When referring about the 'level' of students it is important to point out that the term 'Language Proficiency' comes up to mind as the key factor to measure and rank the skills of listening, speaking, writing and/or reading (Lightbrown & Spada, 2006).

One of the issues that were encountered with this question in particular is precisely the fact that twelve out of fifteen teachers interviewed enquired at the moment of being asked in what area specifically this question was addressed to, in other words in what specific skill this question was meant to be answered.

Different perceptions of the levels of English proficiency were found from the teachers according to 'common reference levels' by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2002) which helps to define language proficiency levels and interpret language qualifications worldwide.

According to the teachers' questionnaire 8 students were at the intermediate level, while 7 were at the basic level. In contrast, during the class observations it was noticed that 12 students were at the basic level, meanwhile the remaining 3 students were at the intermediate level of Language Proficiency in English.

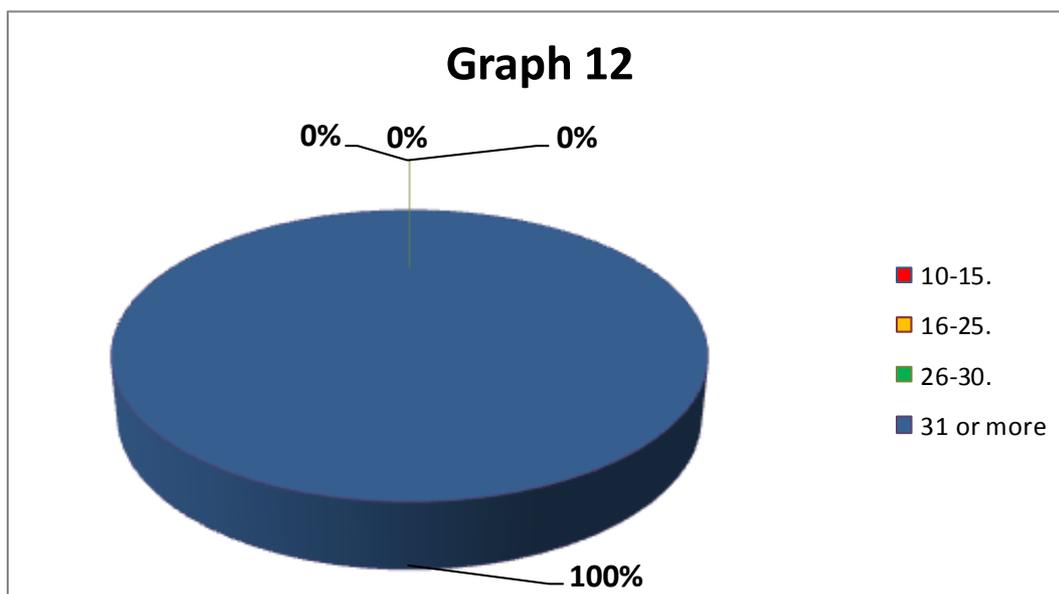
The level of English that each student had was established during the interviews for the student's questionnaire. The way the students answered the questions during the lessons made it evident that their proficiency fell into the basic user.

On the other hand, a great deal of students preferred that the questions were asked in Spanish, while the students referred to as 'intermediate level' answered the questions asked by the teacher in Spanish mumbling some of the words in English.

Taking into consideration the responses of the teachers' interviews, it can be concluded that most public institutions just start teaching English at secondary level, because the English program has been designed in that way. Given that some schools only teach English in a very elementary stage, the students at high schools are beginners, being settled at 8° grade in a basic level, and finishing the 3° grade of Bachillerato with an intermediate level of language knowledge.

Factors Concerning Classrooms

How many students are there in the observed classroom?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

For this particular question it was observed that 100% of the classrooms observed had more than 31 students.

The sitting arrangement in all the classrooms was the traditional, most of them had rows of 5 students at the front by 8 or 10 students at the back.

Class size is a topic of great concern for most teachers in Ecuador, especially for those in public high schools. Harmer (2007) emphasizes that public school classes in several countries have up to 30 students, while in a private schools of language the number falls around 8 to 15 students.

The average classroom attendance in the five public high schools observed was 45 students at least. In some cases, the number exceeded the 50 students. It was evident that no matter how hard the teachers attempted to overlook the number of

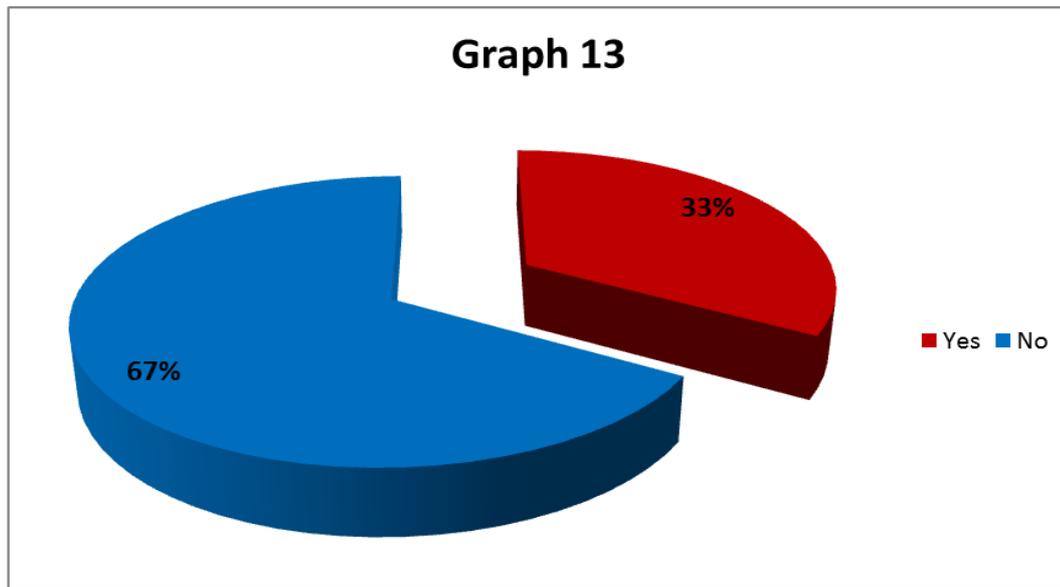
students they were teaching, there were times that they simply were overwhelmed by its size.

Gower, Phillips, Walters (2005) best clarified these situations by mentioning that it is obvious that the larger the class, the more complicated the ideal is to achieve. Sometimes, in large classes it might be only possible to give the briefest acknowledgement: a smile, a gesture, a word of encouragement.

Noise was another issue to be acknowledged; with so many students it was very difficult to hear what the teacher was saying at the back sometimes, besides for ventilation purposes, most of the classrooms have large windows with no mirrors in them, so one could hear the noise from the playground and the street in some classrooms as well. Heat played their part too, Guayaquil being a warm city made it difficult to concentrate and the humidity, also a problem as when the students came back from break the researcher could attest the warmth and heat of the room.

In the same way, 11 students interviewed had it clear in their minds that it was extremely complicated for them to learn English in the current situation, while; the remaining 4 thought that the amount of students did not influence their learning of English.

Do teachers feel comfortable working with this number of students?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

For this particular question it was observed that 67% of teachers felt uncomfortable working with this number of students, while 33% felt comfortable working with this number of students.

Even though, 33% of the teachers felt at ease teaching or working with the number of students their current classrooms had, but during the brief interviews we had, post classroom, or what it is known as "OFF THE RECORD" conversation, they made it evident their discomfort with their current class size.

But not only do teachers felt this way, the majority of the students interviewed shared this opinion, which consider that they were learning at a disadvantage, because of the number students that were in the classroom. They felt that due to this they were not getting enough attention from their teacher. Harmer (2007) points out that it is clear that the size of the class will influence how to

educate. The larger the class the more the attention is divided and more difficult is it to achieve the ideal of every student being attended to their own individual needs.

Gower , Phillips and Walters (2005) wisely illustrated that preferably every single student must be given the chance to repeat any new language; have their errors corrected; have independent assignments if necessary; believe that they are an important part of the class in equal proportion.

Thus, class size is just as important as studying other factors which affect teaching, “class size must be seen as one contextual influence on classroom life, to which teachers and pupils will inevitably have to adapt, and which will affect the nature of the interaction between teachers and pupils” (Blatchford, 2003, p. 9).

Perhaps if there is one aspect which highlights the professionalism of a particular teacher it is watching him or her perform under what you could consider extreme circumstances. Giving a class to more than 40 students, being able to handle the pressure, being able to control the timing, in the sense that assuring that the lesson it is within the time period.

According to Evertson & Veinstein (2006) a teacher must construct lessons that fit externally paced schedule, used activities that had clear programs of action for students, clearly marked the limits of activities and the transitions among them, obtain the most out of the existing time by allowing activities run over the end of the class, so that anything left undone would be finished as homework or completed at the next class.

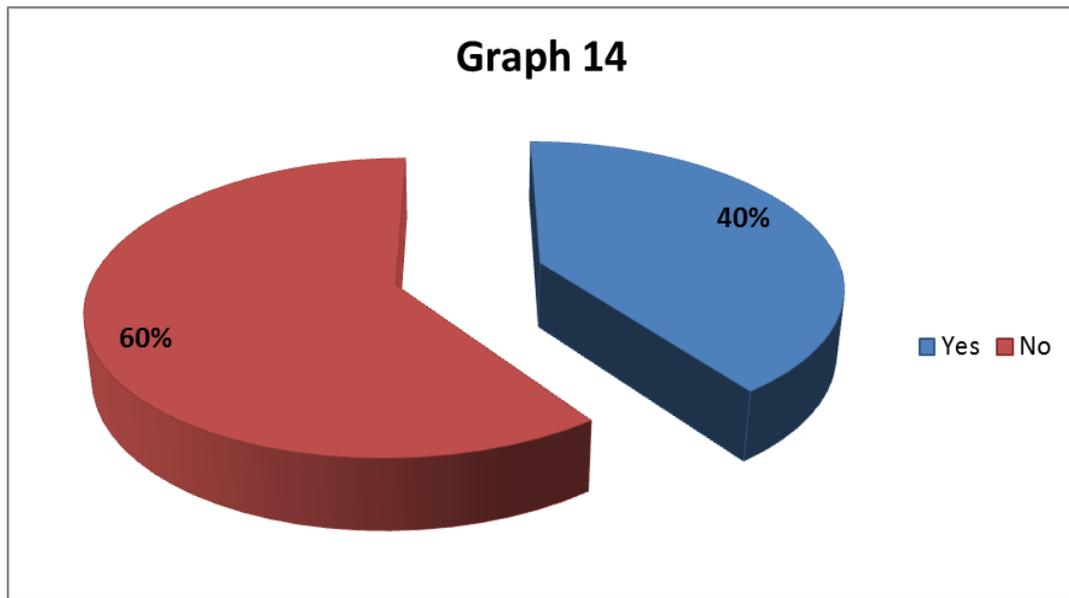
According to Blatchford (2003) there is not much research regarding the effects of class size differences on teacher and students. It does not matter the size of

the class, how big it is, it is important to remember that it is made up of individuals, the majority of whom would like to be listened to by the teacher directly.

Another thing to consider was the noise made by the amount of peers in one room. For the researcher, it was almost too difficult in some cases to hear what the teacher was saying as the observation was made from the back of the classroom in an attempt to make the least distraction possible for the students, as recommended by previous studies “the perfect observer tends to be unobtrusive, static and as far as possible outside the inclusive classroom group.” (Walker & Adelman, 1975, p. 7). The fact that the classrooms had big windows designed for ventilation purposes did not help either, as the acoustic for the rooms were not the most proper ones to spread out the sound.

Heat and sweat was another factor which caught the attention of the researcher, it is important to remember that in order to get the students ‘engaged’ there need to be an comfortable environment where the student focuses only in what is going on in the lesson and is not distracted or even more ‘tired’ of being there.

Do teachers have enough space to work with their groups of students?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

In this particular question it was observed that 60% of teachers consider that they don't have enough space to work with their groups of students. Meanwhile, 40% consider that they have enough space to work with their groups of students.

McLeod, Fisher, Hoover (2003) clarified that classroom space affects instructional programme directly. Also, the teachers should try to make every inch of classroom space count in order to have a rich and appealing classroom environment because they know that the richness of student's experiences are enhanced and diminished by their environment.

The majority of teachers expressed their discontent with current classroom space. They explained that it limited them to their teaching, in a sense that they could not apply all the classroom techniques they would like because of the lack of space.

Tak & Shin (2008) indicate that students spend the majority of their school time learning in the classroom; its design evidently has an influence on them.

Nevertheless, the management of the physical surroundings is regularly ignored by both teachers and school administrators; regrettably most classrooms are designed in ways that make it complicated for students to stay motivated and work happily.

Even though the remaining forty percent of the teachers felt that they had enough space to work with their students in class, it was evident during the observations that they were not at ease with the current classroom space. It affected the way they conducted their lesson; it limited them to move around the classroom.

According to Tak & Shin (2008) teachers in public high schools have very little control over the size of their classrooms, but they are able to choose how to exploit the limited space within them. As an ingenious use of physical space has an important effect on children's learning it is worth spending some time making as good use of it as possible.

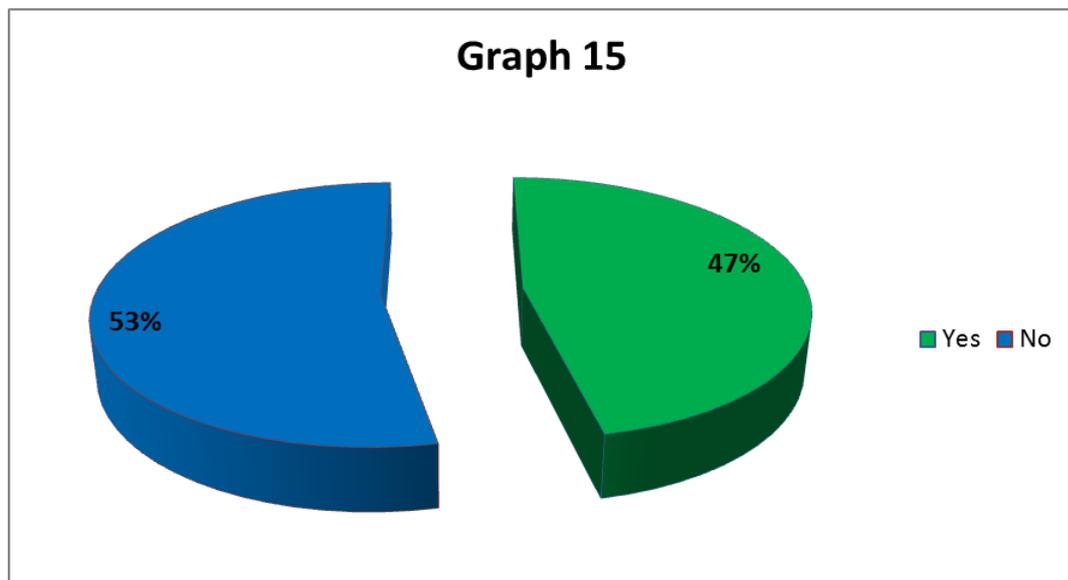
Teachers are conscious of the problems that come when an excessive number of students are assigned to the classroom without sufficient space to hold them. McLeod, Fisher, Hoover (2003) point out that previous studies related to classroom density have established that overcrowded classrooms have an effect on student attitudes and behavior by increasing their displeasure and belligerence and diminishing concentration. Additionally, the manner students behave and move in the classroom, also how much attention they pay in class.

Perhaps its important to mention that from the 15 classrooms observed during this study only 3 of them had enough space for the students to move around and participate in dynamic activities.

In contrast, from the 15 students interviewed 9 of them considered that their present classrooms have enough space to allow them to learn in a comfortable way.

Meanwhile, the remaining 6 were discontent with the current classroom space. It is important to mention that the 9 students considered their answers mostly based on the fact that the size of the class allowed them to play around without being detected, rather than on educational purposes.

Do teachers arrange students' seats in relation to the activities planned for their classes?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

In this particular question it was observed that 53% of teachers arrange the students' seats in relation to the activities planned for their classes and on the other hand, 47% did not, they simply applied the current seating arrangement in all class activities.

Perhaps it is important to mention that even though the teachers interviewed had all the good intentions to apply different seating arrangements during their class,

the size of the class and the classroom space did not allowed them. But we must underline that the majority work around this handicapped.

McLeod, Fisher, Hoover (2003) specify that the organization of space also influence the manner in which students behave and move around the classroom, as well as how much attention they pay to instruction. A first rate instructional program, then, requires efficient time and space use.

Woolfolk (2007) considers that there are two simple forms of organizing space, personal territories and interest areas. In other words, organizing the seating arrangement for the students, according to how the teacher sees the class.

The majority of teachers organized their classes in horizontal rows, mainly because the intention was to direct the students attention towards them, which in sense guarantee them control of the class, help discipline the class in sense.

Teachers were also observed using orderly rows. Mainly this arrangement was used during lecturing. It helped the teachers maintain eye contact with the students.

Organizing the class in circles was discarded, since the class space was reduced and obviously because of the large number of students.

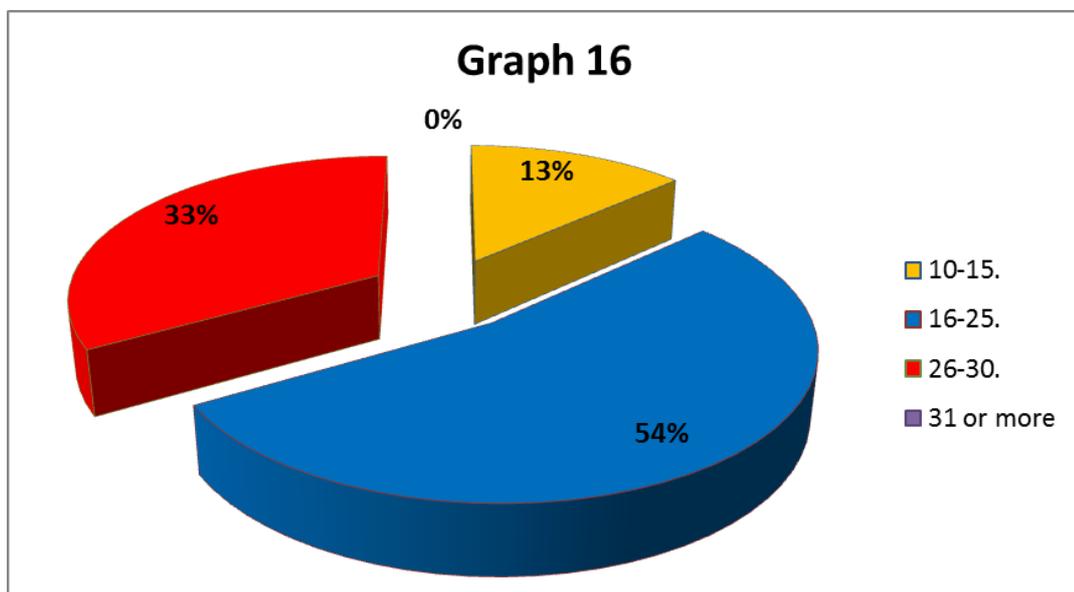
The students interviewed during this study regarding the seating arrangement used by their teachers during class, 11 of them were pleased with the the way it was organized, since they considered that it helps them participate. The remaining 4 were not pleased with the seating arrangement applied by their teacher. They argued that it could be more diversified.

This view could be supported with the facts collected during the observation process. In which it was noticed that from the 15 classes observed, in 10 of them the teachers applied the proper seating arrangement in accordance with the lesson that was being presented.

The remaining 5 teachers basically had to adjust the seating arrangement or simply had to modify the lesson presentation, since the classroom space did not allow for the accommodation required for that particular lesson.

Another issue regarding this matter was the condition of the chairs and desks, they had been refurbished but the researcher could clearly witness that with the pass of the years this furniture was well worn out.

How many students do teachers think is the appropriate number to teach English?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

Once again in this particular question we deal with class size, which is a topic of great concern for most teachers in Ecuador, especially for those in public schools.

Class size is just as important as studying other factors which affect teaching, “class size must be seen as one contextual influence on classroom life, to which teachers and pupils will inevitably have to adapt, and which will affect the nature of the interaction between teachers and pupils” (Blatchford, 2003, p. 9).

In the same way Harmer (2007) points out that public school classes in several countries have up to 30 students, while in a private schools of language the number is around 8 and 15 students.

In this graph we can observe that 54% of teachers think that 16 - 25 students in a class is the appropriate number to teach English. Teachers interviewed shared the same concept that in smaller classes the teacher should be able to give more personalized attention to every student, especially if it is requested by them.

Gower and Walters (2005) wisely illustrated that preferably every single student must be given the chance to repeat any new language; have their errors corrected; have independent assignments if necessary; believe that they are an important part of the class in equal proportion.

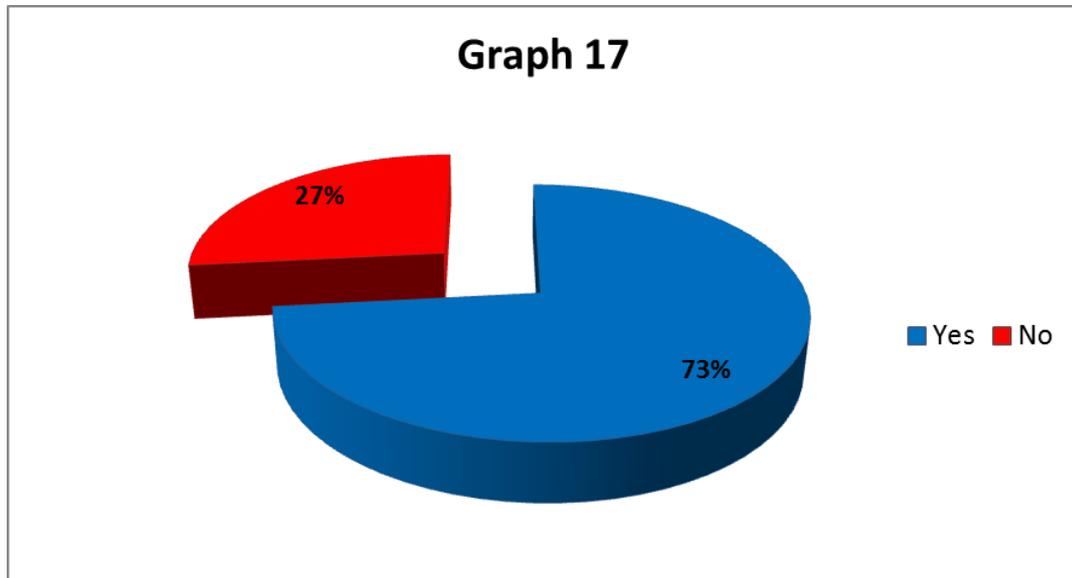
These groups of teachers believe that with this number of students they will be able to transmit their knowledge in an appropriate form. In a manner in, which every single student's development or acquisition of the English language is monitor and evaluated on a daily bases, thus, guarantying the teaching learning – process.

On the contrary, 33 percent of the teachers interviewed consider that 30 students is the appropriate number to teach English in public high schools. Finally, 13 percent of the teachers interviewed consider that fifteen students is the appropriate number of students to teach English.

The teachers argued that these number of students would allow a better lesson presentation, to give personalized attention to every student, thus, guarantying the teaching learning – process.

Based on this information, it is clear that the teachers interviewed in this study believe that the size of the class has a direct influence in how to teach. They argued that the larger the class, the more the attention is divided and more difficult it is to achieve the ideal of every student being attended to their own individual needs.

Do teachers use teaching resources (TV, Tape/Cd recorder, Computer(s), Projector(s), Smartboard, and supplementary materials)?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

For this particular question it was observed that seventy three percent of teachers use teaching resources, such as TV, Tape / Cd recorder, Computer(s), Projectors, Smart board, and supplementary materials during their classes.

Kochlar (1985) describes that an exceptional progress in today's education is the increased use of complementary tools by which the teacher through the use of more than one sensory channel helps to clarify, and establish an accuracy concepts, interpretation and appreciations. In addition to this, it increases knowledge, raises interest and also enriches the imagination of the students.

Even though, the great majority of high schools visited had all the resources that an educator needs at hand, by which to pass on knowledge, establish understanding to their students, there was also the other side, which did not. This demonstrates that not all public schools are privileged to have access to these

essential devices, which are indispensable to keep up with the everlasting changes in today's education.

The remaining twenty percent of teachers did not have all the devices required, in some cases the extra device was a CD recorder, but for the most part they had to work with the black board. To this group of teachers the greatest extra device was improvisation, which in the long run made them better teachers.

This situation is best described by Kochlar (1985) which explains that the use of extra devices may vary according to the institution, location and perhaps even in the quantity and type of resources available to teacher. It has been point out that in some poor areas, teachers have to improvise and create their own home made resources in order to continue teaching.

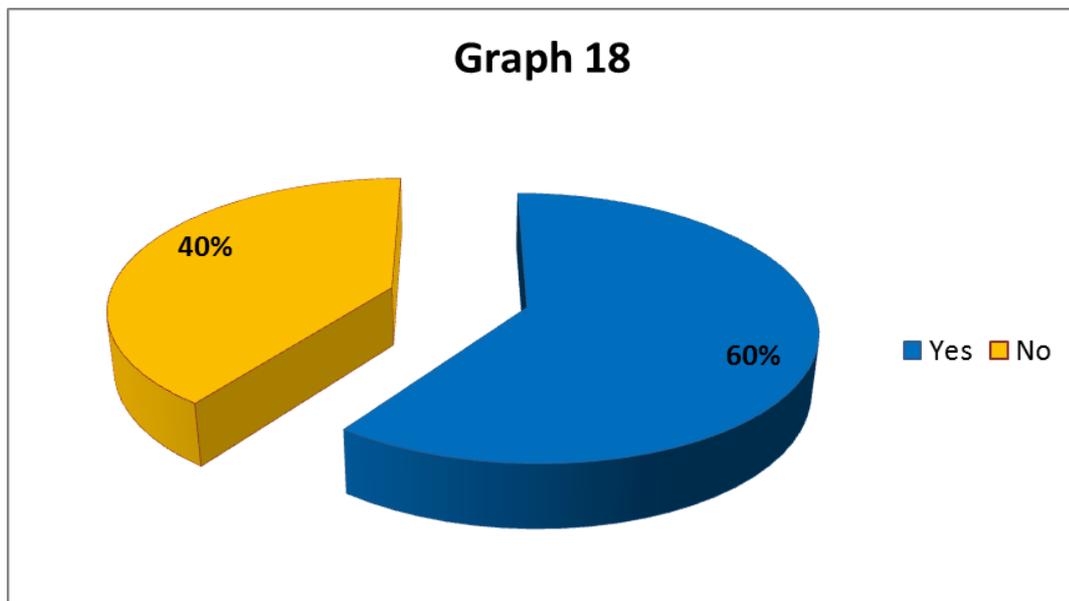
Aduwa and Iyamu (2006) explain that traditionally, teachers have depended on textbooks and the chalkboards as media for disseminating knowledge in the classroom.

Perhaps the most important element of this is that the resources or the lack of them have a direct influence on learning a second language. Consequently, as Kochlar (1985) very well explains it, that in education we should appeal to the mind primarily through the visual and auditory sense organs, in view of the fact that it is likely that 85 percent of our learning is absorbed through these.

Perhaps it is importan to to take into consideration that of the 15 high schools observed during this study 8 of them had at hand for their educators resources such as cd recorders, supplementary materials, TV, which help facilitate the teaching learning – process. In the remaining 7 high schools the teachers had to work with the black board, and improvised in order to get their message across, which complicated

the teaching learning – process, resulting in students leaving the classroom unprepared in regards to the English language.

Do teachers consider appropriate the resources they have in class?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

For this particular question it was observed that 60% of teachers consider appropriate the resources they have in class. Meanwhile the remaining forty percent considered their resources inadequate.

Most of the high schools which were selected for this particular study provided their teachers with the appropriate teaching resources, such as TV, Tape / Cd recorder, Computer(s), Projectors, Smart board, and supplementary materials. This of course made teaching a lot easier, and in sense it bit more interesting to their students.

Kochlar (1985) explains that an outstanding development in today's education is the rising use of extra devices by which educators establish and connect

accuracy concepts, understanding and appreciations. Investigators suggested that in teaching we ought to appeal to the mind generally through the visual and hearing sense organs, because researchers believe that possibly that 85 percent of learning is captivated by these senses.

But not all public schools in Ecuador are privileged to have access to these devices. This may vary according to the institution, location and perhaps even in the quantity and type of resources available to the teacher.

Every day we come across information where it has been pointed out that in some poor areas of the country; teachers have to improvise and create their own home made resources in order to continue teaching. Working in environments that are not suitable for them, and for their students. For instance, classrooms without chairs, without books. Situations like this are real in some schools in Ecuador.

As evidence to support the above comments, it is important to take into consideration that from the 15 high schools observed during this study, 8 of them had at hand for their educators resources such as cd recorders, supplementary materials, TV, which help facilitate the teaching learning – process.

In the remaining 7 high schools the teachers had to work with the black board, and improvise in order to get their message across, which complicated the teaching learning – process, resulting in students leaving the classroom unprepared in regards to the English language.

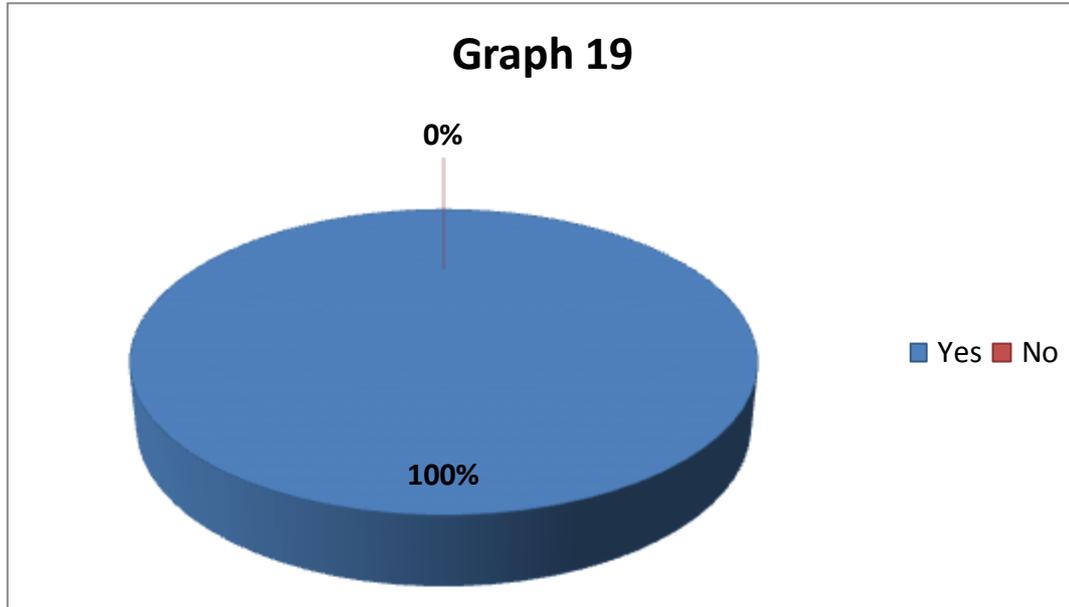
In contrast from the 15 teachers interviewed during this study 9 considered the resources they had appropriate. While, the remaining 6 teachers did not consider appropriate the resources they had in class.

During the observation the researcher could notice the lack of proper equipment such as projectors; computers or other important instruments for the learning-teaching process were not available and had to teach without them.

It is important to mention that there was also a lack of resources used in the observed classes by the teachers. For example, pictures which are easy to get and use to improve and practice vocabulary and language forms; dictionaries which are really useful to provide information and help students to understand what words mean as well. Wood (2011) considers that this lack of creativity of the teachers prevented them from having a more interactive class, and to improve the academic performance of public high school students.

Factors Concerning Educational Institutions

Do the institutions review teachers' lesson plans?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

In this particular question it was observed that 100% of the institutions in this study review their teachers' lesson plans, in some cases at least once at week, in a smaller number at least twice at week.

This demonstrated that at least in these particular institutions the school administration was worried about if their teachers plan their lessons accordingly. On other words, whether or not their teachers prepared themselves for their classes. This in the long term benefits the students, since; it lets us know that the teacher visualizes the teaching – learning process with programmed methods and techniques.

Perhaps to some teachers or educators it may not be as important, because they might have the perception that they can come into the classroom unprepared

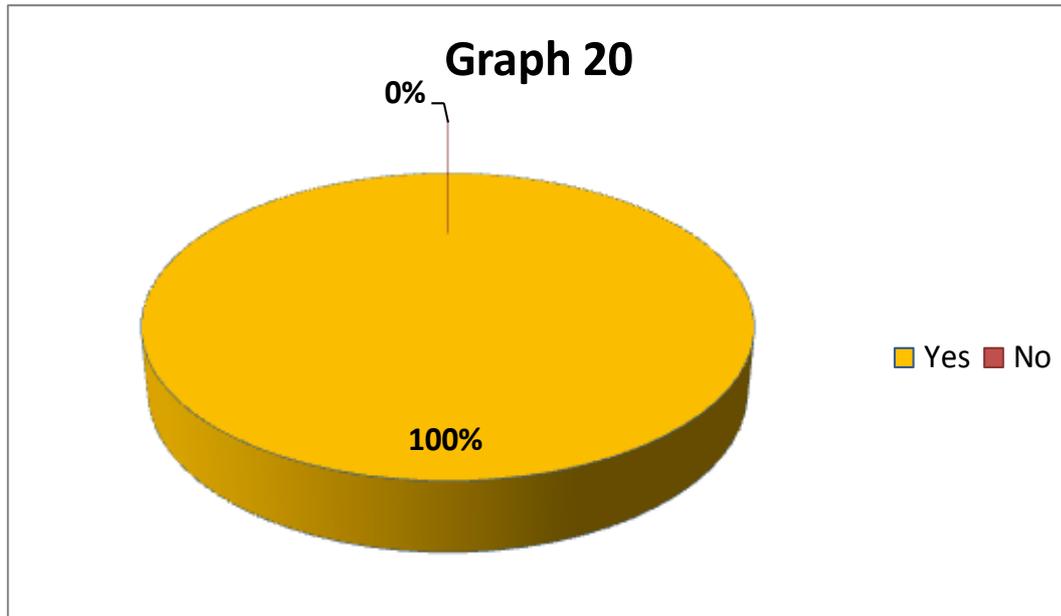
and improvise the lesson, thinking that it would go unnoticed by both students and in some cases school administrators, but the reality is other.

Harmer (2007) explains that a well planned lesson would be easily recognized by the students, thus, sending a message that demonstrates that the teacher has dedicated time to planning the lessons. On the other hand, the lack of preparation may imply the opposite of these teachers' qualities.

On the contrary, from the 15 students interviewed in this research 8 of them argued that the teachers were properly prepared or designated the sufficient time in the developing a specific task, while the remaining 7 did not believe that teachers came prepared or designated enough time in developing a task in the class.

Also, the supervisor claimed that periodical meetings are organized in order to verify that the academic lesson plans, curricula from the teachers are fulfilled, but this information could not be ascertained as the research only took one week and more time is required to establish these statements.

Do the institutions monitor teaching?



Authors: Josue Bonilla and Henry Villavicencio

Source: Teachers's Questionnaire

In this particular question it was observed that 100% of the institutions in this study monitor their teachers, in some cases at least once a week, and in a smaller number twice.

During the classroom observations it was common to see the school supervisor or the school principal come into the classroom, to observe how the teachers were conducting the class and how the students were behaving. Also, it was noticed that the supervisor had been given a clipboard in which he logged in any issues regarding the normal flow of the lessons.

In some cases the presence of the supervisor or the principal did not affect classroom atmosphere at all. At times the researcher could witness that their presence was taken by both the students and the teacher as 'normal'. In fact, in one of the observed classes, the students clapped as the principal entered the room.

The teacher also did not seem to be affected by it either; neither did it affect the students in any way whatsoever. The students seemed to have a good relationship with the supervisor, at times, even better than with the teacher.

Class moved along according to the way it was planned. The teacher seemed at ease and confident with himself.

According to Walker and Adelman (1975, p. 7) “the perfect observer tends to be unobtrusive, static and as far as possible outside the inclusive classroom group.” The observer must be passive, almost like he is not there, watching from the outside, keeping a low profile, taking the role of a spectator, instead of an actor. This in turn is beneficial, since as a spectator he or she can observe things that the actor, in this case the teacher cannot see.

On the other hand, there were a couple of instances in which it seemed to alter the behavior not of the students but of the teachers. The teachers transformed themselves. It was like they had to put on the best show, or performance. Their behavior was not longer natural. Wikeley, Wragg, & Haynes (1996) best described the pros and cons of classroom monitoring by stating that it can be intimidating in some cases, and that it encourages ‘show’ lessons.

While most teachers have answered affirmatively to this question, it is necessary to clarify that the frequency in which the principals, -or the English coordinators in almost all cases- monitor their teachers’ teaching, is variable.

Some of them have claimed to be supervised once or twice a month; other group every six months, others once a year, and finally, there is only one teacher who has declared never have been monitored during the current school year.

Correspondingly, some of the surveyed teachers, who in addition are the English area coordinators in their institutions, have guaranteed that they are constantly monitoring their teachers' group performances.

Conclusions

After a detailed analysis of the results found in this study regarding the Factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools, we can conclude the following:

- It has been established that the students in the five public high schools were being taught by teachers with at least a high school diploma, a College or University degree, and even some were studying a Masters' degree at this point, which guarantees the teaching-learning process.
- An important issue regarding the use of the different teaching techniques for teachers within their classrooms was class size, which in some of the public schools visited surpassed the 50 students. This of course does not give teachers enough time to meet each of the student's individual needs.
- Regarding the amount of time that a teacher speaks English to communicate during a class with his or her students, it has been established that it depends on the level of their students plus the teachers' language proficiency as well. From the observed classes, it was noticed that the students had a low level of English Language Proficiency.
- Class size and classroom space were established as topics of great concern for the teachers interviewed in this study. They felt that their classrooms were overcrowded, which in turn limited them in their teaching.
- Discipline was also identified to be a problem that came as a result of overcrowded classrooms. Teachers expressed that controlling a class with over 50 students was an uphill battle.

- Not all public schools in this study were privileged to have access to different teaching resources such TV, Tape/Cd recorder, computer(s), projector(s), smart board, and supplementary materials. It was observed that some teachers had to improvise and create their own home made resources in order to cover their curricula.

Recommendations

- The Ministry of Education of Ecuador must concentrate all of its efforts in finding the means for reducing over crowdedness in public high schools. Since, it is affecting education as a whole. Currently, teachers are experiencing problems at putting into practice all the techniques they may have experienced due to the lack of facilities available for them.
- It is necessary for The Ministry of Education of Ecuador to provide all public schools with the different teaching resources such as, TV, Tape/Cd recorder, computer(s), projector(s), smart board, that are required in the teaching – learning process. These tools are not longer considered a luxury, but a necessity for Ecuadorian teachers to keep in pace with the everlasting changes in the modern world.
- If the public officials of Ecuador want to make the English language a priority in the public education curricula, important changes must be done with urgency, among them increasing the level of English proficiency in teachers. One of the most interesting features of this research is the fact that public high schools teachers were given a deadline date to acquire their Bachelor degree in English as a minimum requirement stated by the law.
- Another important thing to take into account is the use of authentic material. Using authentic text in the classroom can be a good way for the learner to practice the receptive skills of reading and writing. Authentic texts can make excellent vehicles for practicing the various sub-skills, such as guessing the overall context of the text from important words, or skim-reading and scan-reading quickly for the important information, as well as reading for general understanding. It can also be

used to devise many different activities such as prediction of meaning or subject matter, contextualization, inferring meaning from context. Learners can practice using their prior knowledge to aid in guessing about the subject of a text. This type of activity helps the learner to make connections between their prior knowledge and the text.

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ANNEXES

Factors that affect the English language teaching -learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools

- 1.- Colegio Fiscal Dr. Leónidas Plaza Ortega Moreira:
Dirección: Guasmo Central, Sector Piso y techo, Guayaquil, Guayas
* Profesora Juanita Cruz Santana (coordinator)
* Lcda. Gladys Yagual
* Lcda. Ema Seigua

- 2.- Colegio Cesar Borja Lavayen
Dirección: Eloy Alfaro, Guayaquil, Guayas
* Lcda. Susy Castillo (coordinator)
* Lcda. Martha Espinoza
* Inmaculada Gutiérrez

- 3.- Instituto Técnico Superior Enrique Gil Gilbert
Dirección: Víctor Manuel Rendón y Escobedo, Guayaquil, Guayas
* Lcda. Diana Méndez (coordinator)
* Sra. María Teresa Jalón
* Lcda. Pilar Cabrera

- 4.- Instituto Tecnológico Superior Guayaquil
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* Lcda. Cindy Garzón (coordinator)
* Lcda. Gina Salvador
* Lcda. Patricia Torres

- 5.- Colegio Fiscal Técnico Experimental Veintiocho de Mayo
Dirección: Carlo Julio Arosemena, Guayaquil, Guayas
* Lcdo. Enrique Mendoza (coordinator)
* Lcda. Aida Cisneros
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UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA

CARRERA DE INGLES

TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR:	

1. Which level of education do you have?

High school diploma ()	English Bachelor's Degree ()	English Master's degree ()
Others: _____		

2. Do you consider Students' needs to teach English successfully?

Students' Needs (<i>age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, and learning styles</i>)	
YES ()	NO ()

3. Do you consider Students' level to teach English successfully?

Students' Level (<i>Basic, Intermediate, High Intermediate, and Advanced</i>)	
YES ()	NO ()

4. Which is the level of your students?

*Students' Level			
Basic ()	Intermediate ()	High Intermediate ()	Advanced ()

5. Which of the following methods was used in this class? (check only 1)

Communicative Language Teaching	()
The Natural Approach	()
Cooperative Language Learning	()
Content-Based Instruction	()
Task-Based Language Teaching	()
Cognitive Academic Language Learning	()
Total Physical Response	()
Whole Language Approach	()
Grammar Translation Method	()
Others _____	()

6. Do you use whole- group activities to teach your lessons?

YES ()	NO ()	
Why? _____		

7. Do you use individual activities to teach your lessons?

YES ()	NO ()	
Why? _____		

8. Do you use group work activities to teach your lessons?

YES ()	NO ()	
Why? _____		

9. Do you use English most of the time in your classes?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

10. Do you plan your lessons?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

11. Do you consider aspects such as discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction to teach your lessons?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

12. How many students do you have in this class?

10 - 15 ()	16 - 25 ()	26 - 30 ()	31 - more ()
-------------	-------------	-------------	---------------

13. Do you feel comfortable working with this number of students?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

14. Do you have enough space to work with this group of students?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

15. Do you arrange students' seats in relation to the activities planned for your classes?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

16. How many students do you think is the appropriate number to teach English?
(check only 1)

10 - 15 ()	16 - 25 ()	26 - 30 ()	31 - more ()
-------------	-------------	-------------	---------------

17. Do you use teaching resources (TV, Tape/Cd recorder, Computer(s), Projector(s), Smartboard, and supplementary materials)?

YES ()	NO ()
Which ones? _____	

18. Do you consider appropriate the resources you have in class?

YES ()	NO ()
Why? _____	

19. Does the institution review your lesson plans?

YES ()	NO ()	
If yes, how frequently?		
Once a week	Once a month	Other_____

20. Does the institution monitor your teaching?

YES ()	NO ()	
If yes, how frequently?		
Once a week	Once a month	Other_____

Thanks for your cooperation!!!!!!



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
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MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA
CARRERA DE INGLES
STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR:	

21. ¿Te gusta aprender Inglés?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

22. ¿Las actividades (juegos, trabajos en grupo y trabajos individuales) que se realizan en clase te motivan a aprender Inglés?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

23. Consideras que las actividades realizadas en clase son:

Muy fáciles ()	Fáciles ()	Difíciles ()	Muy difíciles ()
-----------------	-------------	---------------	-------------------

24. ¿Te gusta la forma de enseñanza del idioma Inglés que usa tu profesor?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

¿Por qué?

25. ¿Tu profesor realiza actividades variadas que te permiten interactuar con tus compañeros de clase?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

26. ¿Tu profesor utiliza Inglés la mayor parte del tiempo en la clase?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

27. ¿Tu profesor controla la disciplina en la clase?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

28. ¿Tu profesor les asigna un tiempo determinado para el desarrollo de cada actividad?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

29. ¿Luego de cada actividad realizada, tu profesor te explica en qué fallaste y en qué debes mejorar?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

30. ¿Las instrucciones que da el profesor para realizar las actividades en clase y extra clase son claras?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

31. ¿Consideras que el tamaño del salón de clase te permite trabajar de una manera cómoda?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

32. ¿Consideras que el número de estudiantes te favorece para aprender de mejor manera el Inglés?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

33. ¿Te gusta la forma en la que el profesor adecúa los pupitres para trabajar en los diferentes tipos de actividades?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

34. ¿Se utilizan en clase recursos tales como televisión, grabadora, computadora, pizarras inteligentes, etc.?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

GRACIAS!!!!



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
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MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA
CARRERA DE INGLES
OBSERVATION SHEET

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR (desde 8vo básicaa 3ro bachillerato):	

1. Does the teacher consider Students' needs to teach English?

***Students' Needs**(*age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, and learning styles*)

YES () NO ()

* It can be recognized based on the variety of activities (visual, audio, audiovisual, realia, and on-line) applied, and students' reaction to them.

2. Which is the level of the students?(Check 1)

*Students' Level			
Basic ()	Intermediate ()	High Intermediate ()	Advanced ()

* It can be recognized based on the material they are using or placement done by the institution.

3. Which of the following methods are used?

Communicative Language Teaching	()
The Natural Approach	()
Cooperative Language Learning	()
Content-Based Instruction	()

Task-Based Language Teaching	()
Cognitive Academic Language Learning	()
Total Physical Response	()
Whole Language Approach	()
Grammar Translation Method	()
Others _____	()

4. Which of the following activities are used?

Whole-group activities	()
Individual activities	()
Group work activities	()

5. Which of the following aspects of the lesson plan were applied in the class?

Time	()
Lesson topic	()
Objectives	()
Warm-up activities	()
Introduction of the new topic	()
Guided or individual practice	()
Review/Assessment/Feedback	()
Materials and resources	()

6. Which of the following aspects have been considered by the teacher?

Discipline	()
Feedback	()
Activities management	()
Time management	()

7. How many students are there in the classroom?

10 - 15 ()	16 - 25 ()	26 - 30 ()	31 - more ()
-------------	-------------	-------------	---------------

8. Do students have enough space to move and participate in dynamic activities?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

9. Is the seating arrangement appropriate for the teaching-learning process?

YES ()	NO ()
---------	--------

NOTES:

10. Which of the following resources are there in the classroom to facilitate teaching?

TV	()
Tape/Cd recorder	()
Computer(s)	()
Projector(s)	()
Smartboard	()
Supplementary materials	()
Others	()

11. In which percentage does the teacher use English in class?

25 % ()	50 % ()	75 % ()	100 % ()
----------	----------	----------	-----------

TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

A1	<p>Where are you from?</p> <p>Where do you live?</p>
A2	<p>Where did you learn English?</p> <p>How long have you studied English?</p> <p>Which subject was the most difficult during your major?</p>
B1	<p>How long have you been teaching English?</p> <p>Which skill is easier for you to teach?</p> <p>Would you like to continue studying? Why?</p>
B2	<p>What are the advantages or disadvantages of teaching English in a “non-English speaking country”?</p> <p>What are the main problems a teacher faces when teaching English in Ecuador?</p>
C1	<p>What social benefits are derived from learning English?</p> <p>What is the most important reward of teaching English as a profession?</p>
C2	<p>What are the benefits that come from teachers staying more time in the educational institutions?</p> <p>What is the difference between teaching English as foreign language (EFL) and teaching English as a second language (ESL)?</p>

TEACHER'S LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY:											
C2	()	C1	()	B2	()	B1	()	A2	()	A1	()





***Common European Framework of Reference for
Languages:
Learning, teaching, assessment***

Structured overview of all CEFR scales

Council of Europe (2011). [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment](#)

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1 Common Reference Levels

1.1 Global scale

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

1.2 Self-assessment grid

	Reception		Interaction		Production	
	Listening	Reading	Spoken Interaction	Written Interaction	Spoken Production	Written Production
C 2	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I	I can express myself with clarity and precision, relating to the addressee flexibly and effectively in an assured, personal, style.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles, which present a case with an effective logical structure, which helps the recipient to notice and remember

			do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.			significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.
C 1	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I		I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write detailed expositions of complex subjects in an essay or a report, underlining what I

	and films without too much effort.	relate to my field.	can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers		e conclusion	consider to be the salient issues. I can write different kinds of texts in a style appropriate to the reader in mind.
B 2	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts,	I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view.

	I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.		accounting for and sustaining my views.		and disadvantages of various options.	
B 1	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current	I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes & ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my	I can write straightforward connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest.

	and clear.		events).		reactions.	
A 2	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate need. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job	I can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like „and“, „but“ and „because“.
A!	I can recognise	I can understand	I can interact in a simple	I can write a short,	I can use simple	

	<p>familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.</p>	<p>familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.</p>	<p>way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.</p>	<p>simple postcard, for examples sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.</p>	<p>phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.</p>	
--	---	--	---	--	--	--